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# Continue efforts to preserve harmony: PM

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> Najib says religious harmony panel plays crucial role to bridge interfaith gaps

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PUTRAJAYA: There must be continuous efforts towards strengthening the pillars and fabric of multi-faith to ensure the nation's harmony remained intact.

In making the call, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said Malaysia's complex society has managed to build the nation without any conflicts and this must be maintained.

"After independence, Malaysia has gracefully braced the challenges in bringing the nation up without any conflict that could destroy it.

"This process should not end because building a harmonious nation takes a very long time," Najib said before presenting letters of appointment to the Committee to Promote Understanding and Harmony among Religious Adherents (JKMPKA) at his office, here.

Najib said JKMPKA will play a crucial role in providing the mechanisms to bridge the gaps among the various cultures and religions in society.

"I'm counting on you (JKMPKA) to play your part to achieve the goals.

"We all want peace and harmony, and we want Malaysia to be successful," he said.

Najib added that there are four basic principles that Malaysians need to adhere to for them to have a "sense of belonging" in a single community.

The principles are to respect Islam as the official religion, adhere to the rule of law, respect the Rukun Negara and conduct ourselves in a moderate way.

"The (different communities of the) complex society in this country must also engage with one another, visit and talk to one other and try to look for commonality, rather than differences among us," Najib said.

A total of 32 representatives from various religions have been appointed as JKMPKA members for a two-year period from Jan 31, 2016 to Dec 31, 2017.

Former JPNIN director-general Datuk Azmin Aman Hassan has been appointed as the committee chairman and Council of Churches Malaysia general secretary Rev Dr Hermen Shastri is the deputy chairman.

Founding chairman of the Society for the Promotion of Human Rights (Proham) Tan Sri Simon Sipaun and academician Prof Dr Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid are among the other new committee members.

JKMPKA was formed in 2010 to facilitate talks on various issues including religious conversions and custody of children.