

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	6 JULY 2016

Malaysia condemns terror attacks

NST- 6/7/2016

EXTREMISM: Najib says govt will ensure country does not have teachings that deviate from Islam

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MALAYSIA condemns in the strongest terms the series of terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Belgium, France, Turkey and Bangladesh.

In saying this yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak stressed that the government would continue to monitor the situation in Malaysia to ensure that there were no ideologies, teachings or practices that deviated from the true meaning of Islam.

He said Malaysia was known worldwide as a competitive and progressive Islamic country.

"Based on the principle of *wasatiyyah* (moderation), all our actions are not too extreme or too liberal. In fact, they meet the *maqasid syariah* (five foundational goals) framework, organised by Islamic scholars.

"However, sometimes Islam is misunderstood by some, which brings about prejudice and fear to others that lead to what people term Islamophobia. The fear (of Islam), especially in the Western world, is the result of misunderstanding of the true teachings of Islam."

"Sometimes we have to blame certain groups of Muslims themselves for committing negative acts which do not represent Islam, such as suicide bombers, militants and extremists," he said in his Hari Raya Aidilfitri message.

Najib said, as a Muslim country that was often used as a reference or role model in the region and in the global arena, Malaysia was ranked first in the Global Islamic Economic Indicators 2014-2015 out of 70 nations.

In fact, he said, after the Syariah Index was launched last year, Malaysia had achieved an overall score exceeding 75 per cent in various fields and he believed it would increase from time to time.

On the economy, Najib said although Malaysia faced uncertainties in the global economy recently, Bank Negara Malaysia revealed that Malaysia achieved a gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 4.2 per cent in the first quarter of this year.

"The World Bank also expects the Malaysian economy to remain resilient, with GDP growing at 4.4 per cent this year.

"Malaysia continues to receive much recognition from many international bodies.

"Among others, Malaysia was ranked 18th in the Global Competitiveness Report 2015 (by the World Economic Forum).

"In the World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Ranking 2015-2016, Malaysia ranked ninth."

These, he said, illustrated that the Malaysian economy remained strong and was on the right track towards becoming a high-income advanced economy nation.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak says *fear of Islam* is the result of *misunderstanding of the true teachings of the religion*. File pic

Tabung Haji assures Malaysian pilgrims

PUTRAJAYA: Lembaga Tabung Haji is confident that the Saudi Arabian government has taken every step possible to handle any threat of terrorism, especially in the light of the coming haj season.

Its chief executive officer and managing director, Datuk Johan Abdullah, yesterday said Tabung Haji called on Muslim communities to unite to ensure terror attacks did not take place by giving their full cooperation to the Saudi Arabian government.

He expressed sadness and disappointment over the string of attacks in Jeddah, Qatif and Medina on Monday.

"The attacks do not symbolise the

teachings of Islam that emphasises the sanctity of a place of worship, peace, tolerance and harmony.

"We hope that people will not link the incidents to the interests of certain parties," he said in a statement.

Tabung Haji, said Johan, would be activating its Haj Disaster Management Operation Plan, covering procedures to manage any crisis, with early preparation and an emergency action plan.

He said the plan was put in place to ensure haj operations continued smoothly in the event of a crisis in the holy cities.

"We will be contacting the Saudi Arabian Haj Ministry and the

Malaysian embassy in Saudi Arabia to get the latest information on the safety procedures needed to be taken by pilgrims this year.

"This safety information will be disseminated during the Perdana Haj Course or before the Malaysian pilgrims leave for the holy land."

Meanwhile, Bernama reported that no Malaysians were affected by the suicide bomb attack in the compound of the Prophet Muhammad's Mosque in Medina that left four security officers dead and five injured.

The Foreign Ministry, in a statement, said it and the Malaysian consulate-general in Jeddah would monitor developments from time to time.

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Datuk Seri Najib Razak