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'Return to Constitution to ensure a united nation'

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has set the tone in continuously upholding inter-religious harmony and understanding in the country.

He said Malaysia had undergone nation building without conflicts tearing it apart.

"But, the process takes a long time.

"It is a continuous journey to strengthen the pillars and fabric of a multi-faith and multi-racial society," he said before presenting letters of appointment to members of the Committee to Promote Inter-Religious Harmony and Understanding (JKMPKA) here yesterday.

He said the formation of bodies, such as JKMPKA, was crucial to resolve issues amicably.

He called on committee members to play their part in upholding two key elements, namely harmony and understanding, to achieve success



Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** speaking with former Kek Lok Si Temple abbot Reverend **Datuk Seri Seck Jit Heng** at the presentation of letters of appointment to JKMPKA members in Putrajaya yesterday. With them is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department **Tan Sri Joseph Kurup** (left). Pic by Fariz Iswadi Ismail

and peace.

The members comprise 32 heads of religion, academicians, and those from religious and social non-governmental organisations, as well as

youth representatives.

"As a multi-racial nation with (people of) different faiths, we need to have a mechanism to improve our understanding and appreciation of

the various faiths, including coming up with fair solutions to problems," said Najib.

He said he was confident that people, despite living in a complex society, would continue living in peace and harmony based on a positive attitude.

He said even though Malaysia enjoyed harmony, people must strive towards the true sense of unity.

"We must move towards an ideal situation, where there is a sense of belonging as one Malaysian community; a community bound by respect, belonging and togetherness.

"To achieve this, we must return to the Federal Constitution as the basis of our actions.

"The Constitution is the essence of our nation."

Najib said people must embrace the Rukun Negara as the national philosophy, as agreed on by the nation's forefathers.

"We have to look at our core values, which cut across faiths and communities.

"The values include conducting ourselves in moderation, possessing mutual respect, working together, having the spirit of give-and-take, and wanting to find solutions instead of creating problems.

"We have to culturalise (efforts to promote interfaith harmony and understanding) by making them part and parcel of life."

He said this could be done via engagement and highlighting commonalities instead of harping on differences.

JKMPKA member Bishop Datuk Bolly Lapok said he wanted to know what committee chairman Datuk Azman Amin Hassan had planned for the members.

"Let's hear what the chairman has to say before I disclose my plans," said the Sarawak representative.