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'Asean must fight terror as one'

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ASEANAPOL CONFERENCE: IS ideology has no place in country and region, says PM

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ASEAN must be united in the fight against terrorism, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said yesterday.

He said now was the time for the region to unite and play a greater part alongside the world community

in the global battle against terrorism.

"Digital media is the new frontier in which much of this war must be fought.

"It is a new battleground. Its centrality to our efforts cannot be overestimated and we must seize the opportunity to convince the world that Muslims have nothing to do with the ideology of hatred and destruction," he said at the

launch of the 36th Chiefs of Asean Police (Aseanapol) Conference here.

Najib said Malaysia had initiated the establishment of the Regional Digital Counter-Messaging Communications Centres that would synchronise efforts in Asean and beyond.

"It is vital that this centre uses the studies that illustrate why there is nothing at all 'Islamic' about the 'state' (terror group Islamic State, or IS) that shamefully declares itself as such."

Najib added that he had repeatedly raised the fact that no one was

immune to the threats of terrorism.

"(IS) and its cruel, twisted ideology have no place in our peaceful, diverse, tolerant country, nor in our region," he said.

He said this was why the government had passed the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act, the Special Measures against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act, the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the National Security Council Act.

"We were criticised for passing some of these laws.

"But, my government will never apologise for placing the safety

and security of the Malaysian people first.

"These laws are necessary and other countries have followed our lead," he said, adding that such laws had aided the authorities in monitoring possible terrorists and IS sympathisers.

Najib said the government would continue to put necessary measures in place and security forces were on a heightened state of alert.

On the conference, he urged participants to deliberate on the five challenges he had raised in 2006.