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PM SLAMS ATTACKS ON EGYPT CHURCHES

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Our strongest response is to fight nihilistic menace with a united front, says Najib

TASNIM LOKMAN
AND ZAFIRA ANWAR
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has condemned the terror attacks on two churches in Egypt which killed dozens on Sunday.

Najib on Facebook expressed disgust over what he described as “cowardly attacks” and extended condolences to the families of victims.

“I am disgusted by the cowardly attacks on churches in Tanta and Alexandria. At this time of mourning, our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those lost and the Egyptian people.

“These attacks are yet another reminder of the threat of violent extremism. We must never surrender, and each atrocity should deepen our resolve.”

It was reported that the Islamic State (IS) group had claimed responsibility for the church bombings in the Nile Delta cities which killed at least 44 people.

“Daesh’s (IS) intention is to divide us – Muslims, Christians and other faiths – but our strongest response is to come together and fight this nihilistic menace with a united front,” Najib said.

The Egyptian government has declared a three-month state of emergency.

Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMM) executive chairman Datuk Dr Nasharudin Mat Isa said the terror attacks were a violation of one’s right to worship.

“A terrorist, whatever his propensity – Muslim, Buddhist,

Hindu or Christian – should always be identified and condemned as a terrorist, and never by his religious affiliation.

“GMM calls for the moderates to stand in solidarity against the despicable aim of Daesh (IS) to inflame sectarian strife in Egypt, and for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.”

Wisma Putra yesterday confirmed no Malaysians were injured in the attacks, but said it would continue to monitor developments.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said his ministry stood ready to help bring Malaysians home from Egypt upon decisions by the cabinet or Wisma Putra.

He urged other ministries to put in concerted efforts to address issues on the safety of Malaysians and country’s defence.

He said there was close cooperation between Wisma Putra and the defence, home and higher education ministries to ensure the safety of Malaysians in Egypt.

“Ministries that were not involved in defence activities must face the fact that they may need to work together now. They cannot work in silos,” he said after officiating the Armed Forces Order of Military Service for 2016.

He said Malaysia’s close relationship with Middle East countries had facilitated the exchange of intelligence and data to counter potential attacks at the home front.

“I hope the public will help us. Those on the ground, if they have any information, share with us, with the police or the ministry so that we can monitor it even more closely.”