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'GOVT CHAMPIONS ISLAM HADHARI'

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PM says it's the best way as moderation is the path of human perfection

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THE government will remain steadfast in its mission to promote the spirit of moderation through the concept of Islam Hadhari or Civilisational Islam, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday.

Speaking when officiating the International Conference on Religion and Civilisation Sustainability here, Najib said Malay Muslims had long been regarded as an "exemplar" of moderate Muslims.

"This is why I have championed moderation – or *wasatiyyah* – as the path of the best, for moderation is the path of human perfection, an idea that is taught to us by Islam, as well as other religions."

Islam Hadhari is a concept first championed by former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi during his tenure from 2003 until 2009.

Najib said the Wasatiyyah Institute and Global Movement of Moderates Foundation, both based in Malaysia, were created by the government to provide concrete support for the concept of moderation.

He said Malaysia's spirit of moderation had allowed the country's multiracial society to practise its faiths and celebrate its religious occasions freely.

Najib said it was a religious duty to promote sustainability, and that a true civilisation was one with sustainability at its core.

"We must be sure that people of different faiths are talking to each other, discussing what we have in common, and ensuring that we are as one in fighting extremism and radicalisation."

He said a civilisation would not be sustainable if it failed to take care of its people, values and most importantly, the environment.

"Let me give you the example of a well-known *hadith*, in which Prophet Muhammad said that 'even if the Hour of Judgment Day is about to occur, plant a tree.'"

Najib said according to the Quran, humankind was described as *khalifah*, or God's representatives on Earth who were entrusted with the responsibility to protect all life.

"The government takes its role as *khalifah* very seriously. Sustainability

is one of the three pillars of the New Economic Model we announced in 2010."

He said under the 10th Malaysia Plan, the government achieved a 33 per cent reduction in greenhouse emission intensity, compared with 2005 levels.

"The 11th Malaysia Plan, from 2016 to 2020, goes even further. We want greenhouse emissions to be down by 40 per cent compared with 2005 levels.

"We aim to increase household recycling to 22 per cent."

Najib said the government intended to lead by example and had set itself the aim of at least 20 per cent of government procurement being designated "green" by the end of the plan.

The inaugural two-day conference was organised by the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) in conjunction of its 25th anniversary celebration.

The conference aims to provide a platform for scientists and people of different faiths to discuss issues concerning science, religion and socio-economic development.

Present were Abdullah, who is also IKIM chairman, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom and IKIM director-general Datuk Professor Dr Azizan Baharuddin.