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NAJIB: WE ARE TOUGH ON EXTREMISM

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No terror acts in Malaysia due to govt's proactive measures, PM tells Saudi news channel

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MALAYSIA has managed to stave off terrorist attacks because of its tough stand and intolerance for any form of extremism, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Laws that empower security forces to deal with terrorism and impose swift justice on extremists elements before they strike had helped to counter the threats, he said in an interview with the Al Arabiya news channel on Sunday.

The Saudi Arabia-based news organisation had asked how Malaysia avoided terrorist attacks in the country. Due to the proactive measures taken by the government, Najib said, Malaysia had not seen any major terrorist acts in the country.

"However, the condemnation of those before a court of justice requires evidence against them, so the jury can find them guilty.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak in an interview with the Al Arabiya news channel in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday. BERNAMA PIC

"This is how we succeeded in avoiding terrorist acts, except for a single incident, but it was not meaningful," Najib said, referring to the incident in which a grenade was thrown in the vicinity of a nightclub here in June last year.

Najib said the incident did not result in any deaths, only minor injuries, and that the Malaysian

authorities had arrested about 270 people who embraced the Islamic State ideology.

In contributing to fighting terrorism, Najib said, Malaysia was cooperating closely with other countries in intelligence exchange.

"There is, for example, good interagency cooperation for the exchange of intelligence informa-

tion and timely intervention as we are a party to the peace process in the southern Philippines, where Malaysia is leading this process.

"We are also cooperating with the people and government of Thailand to bring peace in southern Thailand. This is in the regional context," he said.

Outside the region, he said,

Malaysia also cooperated with other countries since some Malaysians were in Syria and Iraq fighting with IS.

"No country can single-handedly address global terrorism because it will require the cooperation of all nations," he said.

Commenting on Saudi Arabia's King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Saud's recent visit, Najib said it had significant effects in terms of fraternal relations linking Malaysia with the Saudi government, the mutual desire for security cooperation as well as the relations between Malaysians and Saudis.

During the four-day state visit, Najib had also taken a selfie with the king, which went viral on social media. On this, he said that while he understood all the protocols involved, he simply had to try his luck and asked King Salman for a selfie.

"I was surprised and delighted when he accepted my request. I said to myself, this is an opportunity to show King Salman in a new angle because he is, in fact, a very nice person.

"I wanted to show the human side of King Salman, an aspect which does not appear evidently, especially when we adhere to the requirements of protocols.

"I somehow risked it and posted it on Twitter. But, the selfie took Malaysia and Saudi Arabia by storm, and both sides were delighted."