

**Youth volunteer brigade to assist the poor, sick**  
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**By Azura Abas**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak last night launched the National Service Volunteer Brigade, comprising its alumni, to provide assistance to the poor and sick, as well as victims of natural disasters.

To date, the National Service programme has trained some 500,000 youths nationwide since its inception in 2004.

Najib said these former trainees would be engaged to give back to the society through volunteer work.

"Not only during natural calamities, you can help in many other ways, too, including visiting the sick in hospitals and conducting gotong royong programmes in schools or public places," he said at the launch of the "We are 1Malaysia Children" mega gathering here.

He said the volunteer brigade had set up its secretariat, involving the National Service alumni secretariat which is based in the National Service Training Department under the Defence Ministry.

"All 80 National Service training camps will be the volunteer brigade's base at district level to ensure that it reaches out to many people across the country."

More than 15,000 people, majority of whom are youths and former National Service trainees, came together to celebrate as 1Malaysia children last night.

The youths proudly waved mini national flags at the event held at the Bukit Jalil Hockey Stadium.

Also, some 150 former National Service trainees, who had walked non-stop for some 150km from Ayer Keroh in Malacca to Bukit Jalil here, earned their place in the Malaysia Book of Records.

The formation of the volunteer brigade, Najib said, would ensure the continuity and relevance of the National Service programme beyond the three-month training.

The government, he added, was also ready to render its assistance, including financial aid, to ensure that the volunteer brigade became a success and would be able to contribute significantly in nation-building.

The National Service programme, Najib stressed, had been mooted to ensure that the young generation was properly groomed to lead the country.

"We want a young generation that can work as a team."

"We want a generation that loves this country and will be able to defend the land from internal and external foes.

"We want a generation that has discipline and strong moral values."

National Service training, he pointed out, was a preparatory programme for the nation's youth.

The success of such a programme could be gauged based on what trainees learned in three months and how they could contribute to the nation's progress.

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