

Tithes and wakaf from businessmen help poor

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SUCCESSFUL Muslims who have excelled in business and other fields are encouraged to share their wealth with the needy as this would help create a balanced society.

PEKAN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said Islam had always stressed the importance of wealth sharing through tithes and wakaf (religious donations).

"This is the beauty of Islam as a syumul (complete) religion. It encourages Muslims to succeed in life, get a higher income, work hard and excel in business so that they can help others, especially the poor," he said at a function where he distributed tithes totalling RM1.65 million to 6,000 eligible recipients in his Pekan constituency yesterday.

The tithes were from Bank Rakyat, UDA Holdings Bhd, Amanah Raya Berhad, Tabung Haji, Affin Islamic Bank Bhd and Yayasan Basmi Kemiskinan.

Najib said the distribution of wealth through tithes could help reduce the social gap between the haves and the have nots.

He also said that Islam should never be associated with poverty as the religion had always encouraged its followers to excel in life but, at the same time, asked them to share their wealth with the needy.

"Islam does not create a situation where the rich are getting richer while the poor become poorer," he said, adding that wealthy Muslims must always remain humble, generous and never forget their responsibility to assist the poor.

Najib also thanked the corporations and agencies which paid the tithes distributed yesterday as their contributions were the highest ever recorded in Pekan to date.

One of the recipients, 54-year-old Asiah Mat of Kuala Pahang, said she was grateful for the tithe payment as it would help her buy food for the breaking of fast with her three children.

"It's not for Hari Raya Aidilfitri as I'm more concerned about our daily needs. We normally get new clothes for Hari Raya from relatives and friends," said the single mother who receives RM100 monthly aid from the Welfare Department.

Wheelchair-bound Mohd Zawawi Othman, 59, said the RM300 he received would be used to prepare for Aidilfitri.

"My wife and children now support the family as I was involved in an accident early last year. We will buy some cookies and make lemang as we want to fete guests to our humble house on Aidilfitri," said the father of six from Peramu Jaya 3, who previously worked as a van driver.

Zalmah Baki, a 76-year-old grandmother, planned to give duit raya to her grandchildren when they visited her on Aidilfitri.

"I don't mind sharing the money as I want them to be happy," said Zalmah, who stays with her eldest son in Kampung Langgar. Additional reporting by Fahirul N. Ramli

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