

Moderation concept well received by Asia, Europe
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BRINGING PEACE: Najib tells how it resolved 40-year-old Mindanao conflict

VIENTIANE: THE moderation concept mooted by Malaysia to solve conflicts has been well received by Asian and European leaders, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said yesterday.

In fact, the concept had been incorporated into the ninth Asia-Europe Meeting Summit's (Asem) declaration as well as the chair's statement at the summit.

"I said during the meeting that the moderation concept can contribute to the conflict-solving process as well as preventing future conflicts," he said at the end of the two-day summit here.

He said he highlighted the need for the East and West to adopt moderation to resolve conflicts to achieve peace.

Najib said he shared with other leaders on how the 40-year-old conflict in the Philippines was resolved through the moderation approaches taken by the Philippine government, Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Malaysia, which had acted as a facilitator.

"If all had taken a hardline approach, the conflict, surely, could not have been resolved."

On Oct 15, Manila and MILF signed an agreement to end the conflict in which 120,000 people died. Najib witnessed the signing ceremony in Manila.

"The framework agreement (for peace involving Bangsamoro in Mindanao) is based on values of moderation as practised by our country."

He said he also told Asem delegates that Malaysia approached the conflict in Rakhine, Myanmar, by using moderation to pacify warring factions.

"Our humanitarian aid is distributed to Muslims and Buddhists in Rakhine as we recognise that the conflict was brought about by poverty."

He said a government-backed non-governmental organisation supplying aid to the victims had taken a position that the problem in Rakhine was not a religious conflict.

Najib said he had held bilateral discussions with British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, William Hague, and Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Jansa on the sidelines of the summit.

Najib said he was informed by Hague that despite economic pressures in the United Kingdom, there were signs of recovery.

"According to him (Hague), the eurozone issue is still serious but there are possibilities, even in such a situation, for us to increase trade and investments.

"He stated that both countries should strive to double the value of trade even if the target is rather high, especially in the context of the economic climate."

He said Hague expressed his appreciation for the role played by Malaysia in the peace deal involving Bangsamoro and the Philippine government.

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