

**Government Has Always Upheld Islam - Muhyiddin
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 22 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional (BN) government has always upheld and propagated the teachings of Islam, which has been the core foundation of unity of the Muslim community in the country, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said.

He said Umno, as the largest party for the Malays and Muslims in Malaysia, had also set the goal to uphold, defend and propagate Islam as its principle.

"Alhamdulillah (All praise be to Allah), with our leaders' steadfastness in defending the sanctity of Islam despite the many challenges faced, the position of Islam in this country is still secured."

He said this when addressing mosque and surau committee members and Federal Territories Islamic religious teachers and preachers at Usamah bin Zaid Mosque in Wangsa Maju, here, Monday.

Muhyiddin also urged religious institution officials, as well as religious school teachers, to work with the government in combating deviant teachings and in protecting the position of Islam as the official religion of Malaysia.

He said they all had an equally important role as the government's to tackle confusion in faith and issues that could undermine moral values, such as the agenda of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups who tried to create disharmony among Muslims.

"To uphold Islam, the government has built many mosques and surau, appointed imam and religious teachers, and provided adequate training for the preachers.

"Institutions like the Malaysia Islamic Development Department (Jakim), Federal Territories Islamic Religious Department (Jawi) and the Islamic Religious Council have also helped the religious teachers and preachers, besides providing funds and support for religious-based activities," he said.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said apart from preachers, other institutions such as private religious schools, must also play their part in upholding Islam based on the curriculum set by the ministry.

"The public religious schools (sekolah agama rakyat), for example, have been recognised as schools that contribute most to the Muslim community in terms of Islamic education.

"So, we can accept them as private religious schools which deserve government aid," he said.

Muhyiddin said the government was able to implement various Islamic-based programmes because it recognised Islam as the federal religion.

He said this could not be done in other countries but only in Malaysia, as the position of Islam was well protected in the Federal Constitution.

For that, the deputy prime minister said Malaysia was always respected and emulated by other Islamic countries, including in managing a multiracial and multireligious society.

At the event, Muhyiddin also presented Jawi's contributions totalling RM377,500 to 755 recipients, including those selected as the Best Imam, Best Bilal, Best Mosque and Best Surau.

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