

Najib Asks Muslims to Offer Non-muslims Clearer Picture of Islam
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PUTRAJAYA, May 27 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has urged Muslims to offer to non-Muslims a clearer picture of what Islam is all about.

"In today's society, Islam is largely misunderstood. Some fear it. Others have formed stereotypes about it. It is up to us to change these perceptions and offer a clearer picture of what Islam is all about," he said.

Najib's advice was contained in a written message addressed to participants of the Putrajaya Premier Lecturer Series here today.

The prime minister also attended the lecture, entitled "Past Achievements and Present Challenges in the Muslim World", by Dr Farhan Ahmad Nizami at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC).

Farhan is the founder director of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, a Prince of Wales Fellow at Magdalen College and an Emeritus Fellow of St Cross College, Oxford.

Najib said the role Muslims played in reaching out to non-Muslims should be seen as part of their responsibility to bring back the glorious days of Islam while repairing the relationships that had been significantly frayed or altogether destroyed over the past decades.

"Our endeavour should be less about influencing people and more about changing perceptions by offering the truth," he said in the message.

Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek and Media Prima Bhd chairman Datuk Johan Jaaffar also attended the lecture.

Najib said Malaysia, where Islam was the central and dominant religion, was ready to bring Islam to the whole world for the next chapter.

"In our endeavour to move beyond fear and distrust and provide scope for both universality and cultural authenticity, we will draw on the essential wisdom that is the common heritage of all humankind.

"We believe we can merge into one mutually respectful society if we transcend all of our differences and champion each other's interests with 'One Voice, One Aspiration'," he said.

Najib said lecture series, a premier world-class event of global stature, provided a platform where one could engage in a healthy discussion about Islam where it was beneficial on

many levels.

"While we present new knowledge and offer different angles at which to look at Islam, it is our hope that this effort will open our minds to a new and refreshing way to see, appreciate and experience Islam.

"By doing this, we can begin to nurture a more intellectual society that can compete at the same level of understanding as others from around the globe," he said.

Najib said he was delighted that Farhan had agreed to share his thoughts, which offered a clearer perspective of Muslims who have great respect and tolerance towards others of different faiths while maintaining peace, stability and harmony.

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