

**Najib Launches 'Rakan Wasatiyyah' To Propagate Ideology**  
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PUTRAJAYA, May 14 (Bernama) -- Prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today launched the 'Rakan Wasatiyyah' (Friends of Moderation) who will play the role of agents to assist the community in understanding the approach better, thus curbing the spread of extremism and liberalism in the country.

He said 'wasatiyyah' or moderation was the best way of resolving the crisis faced by the Muslims worldwide when the image of Islam was being tarnished through various negative portrayals.

"Some quarters believe that Islamophobia (the fear of Islam) has now become an industry that can generate US200 million (RM717.6 million).

"In fact, almost every day we are shown negative image of Islam through the world's mainstream media as well as the video game industry which has become the craze among youths," he said at a gathering of 'Rakan Wasatiyyah' at his official residence, Seri Perdana, here.

The gathering was attended by 50 Friends of Moderation selected among individuals capable of conveying the ideology on the approach to the community.

The 'Rakan Wasatiyyah' or Friends of Moderation group was created to support the Malaysian Wasatiyyah Institute (IWM) to propagate the moderation approach to the community and to ensure that the information conveyed were valid and fulfilled the Islamic principles.

Najib said in the era of the borderless world currently, the community expressed whatever they felt in the social media without considering the outcome, and the enforcement of the law alone was insufficient to curtail the scenario.

Thus, he hoped the Friends of Moderation could play a role in giving concrete information based on knowledge to show that the true principles of Islam was very far from extremist elements.

"I also hope that Rakan Wasatiyyah can contribute fully to the work program of the IWM and go down to the ground to propagate the Wasatiyyah ideology," he said.

"I am very optimistic if the synergy between the Rakan Wasatiyyah and IWM can be achieved, then all our aspiration will become a reality," Najib said.

The prime minister later presented the instrument of appointment to the 50 Rakan Wasatiyyah comprising public university lecturers, government officers at the central and state levels and Muslim social activists.

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