

Terrorism and Violent Extremism Are Real Threats – PM

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysia vows to not allow the country to be so open to infiltration of terrorism and violent extremism as the threat is real and the government takes the matter very seriously, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said the country had already established the law to protect the nation against such acts namely the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act or SOSMA, the Special Measures Against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act, The Prevention of Terrorism Act and the National Security Council Act.

The best way to uphold civil liberty against any act of terrorism was to ensure the safety of the nation, he said when launching the two-day International Conference on Deradicalisation and Countering Violence, Extremism 2016 (IDC 2016) here, today.

Najib said there was no civil liberty under Daesh and it was no shield against those who were set on committing acts of terrorism.

"I make no apology, I repeat, I make no apology for every step to preserve that safety, and for making the security of all Malaysians my first priority.

"We will not wait for an outrage to take place before putting all measures necessary in place. That is our principle," he said.

The Prime Minister said the Daesh group of militants had made people in Syria and Iraq suffer, displaced millions and since then the global community was horrified by the attacks on Paris, Istanbul, Ankara, Beirut and Jakarta as well as the bombing of the Russian passenger jet over Sinai.

Having been overshadowed by Daesh, Al-Qaeda now seemed to be engaged in an obscene competition with the newer terrorist group by affiliating in the Islamic Maghreb where the group's recent assaults were on hotels in Mali and Burkina Faso, he said.

"Hundreds have died, and many have been terribly injured. And for what? Not for Islam as there can be nothing Islamic about terrorism. These groups blaspheme against a religion of peace, tolerance and understanding.

"They appal the vast majority of Muslims who say loud and clear: 'you do not act in our name,'" he said.

Najib said an important part of countering violent extremism laid in clearing away distortions and lies about religion.

He said in retelling the narrative of Islam, it would make it clear that extremists who were the blasphemers and their acts insulted the holy Quran and the Prophet Muhammad.

Najib also announced that Malaysia had translated the special rehabilitation module into three languages namely Arabic, English and French which accorded with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178, which required member countries to formulate a programme for returning foreign terrorist fighters.

In materialising Malaysia's firm resolve, he said the country had initiated the Regional Digital Counter Messaging Communication Centre, which would synchronise efforts in ASEAN and beyond.

He said the centre would utilise studies that there was nothing at all 'Islamic' about the state that Daesh had set up.

"Our muftis, our media commissions, our tech-savvy young people for whom the social media is an integral part of their daily lives, would ensure that the messages the centre sends out are solid, persuasive and real," he said.

He said the centre must state clearly that the militant groups were wrong and Muslims had nothing to do with their hatred and destructive ideology.

The IDC 2016 saw the participation of Ministers from ASEAN countries and nine Malaysia's Strategic Partners namely Australia, France, Italy, Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

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