

**JAKIM Drafting National Tahfiz Education Policy - Najib  
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 20 (Bernama) -- The government, through the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) is in the midst of drafting a National Tahfiz Education Policy (DPTN) to strengthen Al-Quran tahfiz (memorisation) institutions in the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Therefore, he urged tahfiz centres in the country to give their views and suggestions on the development of DPTN, to ensure such educational institutions continue to thrive in Malaysia.

"I will personally give attention to the formation and implementation DPTN," he said at a gathering of 20,000 huffaz (memorisers of Al-Quran) and the launch of 'Gabungan Persatuan Institusi Tahfiz Al-Quran Kebangsaan' (National PINTA) at the Federal Territory Mosque here, tonight.

He said the Government supported tahfiz education in the country through the establishment of Maahad Tahfiz Al-Quran Wal-Qiraat as a unit in the Islamic Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Department since 1966.

With the establishment of the unit, he said, Tahfiz Al-Quran began at the Lecture Hall of the National Mosque on March 1, 1966 with eight student apprentices selected from different states in the country.

"Maahad Tahfiz is the official tahfiz institution placed under the Prime Minister's Department. This shows how close tahfiz education is with the administration of the Malaysian government," said the prime minister.

In 1997, the Maahad Tahfiz was promoted to become a division under JAKIM.

Najib said besides developing the DPTN, the government was also committed to ensuring that all the country's administration complied with the requirements outlined by Islam.

"Al-Quran education and memorisation of the Quran are among the most important ingredients in the context of protecting the religion.

"(It) also at the same time dismisses accusations and slander of extremists against the sacredness of Islam, whether it be (in the form of) slander and threats by radical extremists, or even the threats of liberals, who are increasingly advocating their beliefs in our society today," he said ,

Najib also welcomed the establishment of madrasah associations and tahfiz centres in the various states, which allowed the voices and views of these institutions to be heard.

"For me, this is a proactive and positive initiative which helps our efforts to uphold and improve the field of tahfiz Al-Quran in the country. Alhamdulillah!," he said.

On the establishment of the PINTA - which is a confederation of the state PINTAs - the prime minister

urged its leadership to focus on issues at national and international level, and to be always willing to actively expand the scope of its contribution to the local and international community.

In recognition of the efforts of huffaz to establish the state and national PINTAs, Najib announced that the government would contribute RM10,000 to each state PINTA which was under the National PINTA.

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