

**Zakat Concept Can Narrow Social Gap, Strengthen Muslim Hub - Najib
Bernama
June 26, 2016**

PEKAN, June 26 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the concept of compulsory charity or zakat, which is the fourth pillar of Islam, can uphold the principle of social justice to narrow the gap between the rich and poor.

The Prime Minister said the tithes that were required of Muslims could also clean properties by helping the needy and, thus, build good morals and strengthen relations among Muslims in the country.

"When we look at the concept and purpose of the tithes, it is to form a noble personality so that we do not get carried away with an attitude that is arrogant, haughty and too much pursuing of material until we forget the basis of religion.

"This is the basis of our religion, the foundation of our gratitude and basic human relations, which is why giving and contributing zakat is very important in the community," he said.

He said this when attending the zakat presentation ceremony, totalling RM1.72 million to 6,264 individuals, comprising senior citizens, disabled and single mothers in the Pekan parliamentary constituency here today.

Also present were the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, who also distributed zakat to the recipients later.

Among the zakat contributors who attended the event were Bank Rakyat chairman Jen (B) Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Zainal, Naza Corporation Holdings Sdn Bhd group chairman SM Nasaruddin SM Nasimuddin and UDA Holdings Berhad chairman Datuk Dr Shafie Abdullah.

At the ceremony held at the Sultan Ahmad Shah convention hall, Najib who is also Pekan Member of Parliament, also received zakat contribution of over RM1.72 million from eight corporate bodies and two businessmen.

The zakat was received from Bank Kerjasama Rakyat Malaysia Berhad amounting to RM600,000: Naza Holding Berhad (RM250,000) Uda Holdings Berhad (RM200,00); Roadcare (M) Sdn Bhd (RM200,000), Lembaga Tabung Haji (RM100,000).

Zakat was also contributed by Affin Islamic Bank Berhad (RM75,000) SME Bank

(RM50,000); Yayasan Basmi Kemiskinan (RM50,000) and two businessmen - Datin Mariamah Mohamed (RM100,000) and Datuk Abdul Rahman Soltan (RM100,000).

Najib thanked all zakat contributors concerned for choosing to assist the needy in Pekan to ease their burden in preparing for the Aidilfitri.

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