

## **Bringing People Together Key To Achieving True Civilisation - PM Najib**

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the key to achieving true civilisation, one that has sustainability at its core, is to bring people from different walks of life together as one.

The Prime Minister said the relationship among religion, sustainability and civilisation was something that "everyone must discuss more widely as we set the course of developing our nation".

"If the power of religion is to be harnessed to send the message that it is a religious duty to promote sustainability, and that a true civilisation is one that has sustainability at its core, we must be sure that peoples of different faiths are talking to each other, discussing what we have in common and ensuring that we are as one in fighting extremism and radicalisation," he said in his speech before opening the international forum on 'Religion and Civilisational Sustainability' here today.

Also present at the forum, organised by the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM), were former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is also IKIM chairman, and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom.

Najib said Islam described humankind as 'khalifah' (caliphs), and there was a similar biblical notion of man being God's steward on earth, which both conveyed the idea that man's role was to sustain the world.

"But our duty is not only to take care of it, to heal it, and to nurture it. It is also to ensure that it thrives.

"So it is our responsibility not only to protect life from crime, war, epidemic diseases and other afflictions, but also to further it, quantitatively, for example, by expanding provision

of health care that lengthens people's lives and, qualitatively, by providing for an enhanced quality of life.

Najib said the natural result of protecting and furthering these objectives meant that any society that did so was on the path of civilisation.

"A state in which quality of life, religious philosophy and practice, and intellectual development are all supported and cherished," he said.

Najib said this was why Abdullah had championed 'Civilisational Islam' or 'Islam Hadhari', because the values of a civilisation were what sustained it.

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