Najib: Malaysia a failed state if we cannot achieve this

By LOSHANA K SHAGAR

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia would be a “failed state” without national unity and interfaith harmony as its foundation, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He referred to interfaith harmony and unity as seeds that were planted by the founding fathers of Malaysia.

“They planted the seeds when we gained independence 60 years ago, and we are enjoying the fruits now. “As Malaysians, we should continue to nurture this tree. If we allow it to become infested with termites or chop it down, it means we will have no place else to go.

“If that happens, Malaysia will truly become a failed state,” said Najib at the World Interfaith Harmony Week celebration at the Forest Research Institute (FRIM) yesterday.

The celebration carried the theme “Love God, love your neighbour” and focused on youths, with various activities to educate them on the need to respect people of other beliefs.

“Najib also called on Malaysians to continue upholding the concept of unity in diversity, calling it the bedrock of the nation.

“If we strengthen this culture of respect and celebrate diversity, our understanding and respect for those of other religious beliefs will increase. We will learn to not insult others, especially on social media,” he said.

The Prime Minister acknowledged that more could be done to strengthen national unity, but said Malaysian society was on the right path.

“We have elevated festivals like Christmas, Wesak, Deepavali, Chinese New Year and even Gawai and Kaamatan to national celebrations.

“I also formed diplomatic relations with the Vatican, we have an ambassador there now,” he said.

However, Najib asserted that based on the Constitution, Islam was still the religion of the federation and that must be understood by all Malaysians.

“We are a success story for unity and harmony, and I am committed to making Malaysia even more successful in the future,” he added.