

**TODAY'S LEADERS MUST NOT BE AVARICIOUS, ARROGANT LIKE COLONISTS
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
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MELAKA, Feb 20 (Bernama) — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim advised today's leaders against being avaricious and arrogant like the officers of the countries that once colonised this nation.

He said current leaders must not behave like that if they are sincere about wanting to build Malaysia to be a better place.

“We know that we would not be here enjoying the benefits of independence if not for the services of the great figures of the past who were willing to pledge their lives and property to achieve independence for our nation.

“This is also a reminder to the leaders who carry the trust now to learn from their (previous leaders') good and positive elements and characteristics and not be dragged by the practices of avaricious and arrogance of colonial officials,” he said.

He said this when speaking at the 68th Anniversary of the Independence Declaration of the Federation of Malaya celebration at the Proclamation of Independence Memorial in Banda Hilir here tonight.

Also present were the Yang Dipertua Negeri of Melaka Tun Mohd Ali Mohd Rustam, Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Ab Rauf Yusoh and Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing.

Anwar said that to remember the services of former leaders, the next generation should strive to elevate the dignity of the country to a higher level.

“The next generation must strive as best possible to raise the dignity of the country, develop the economy, continue the quality of education and health, (and) attract tourists and industries (to invest) so that the people can live more comfortably.

“And this is our commitment at a time that we feel moved and touched by our conscience because we are a generation that remembers deeds,” he said.

The Prime Minister also said that while the country’s Constitution is seen to give privileges to the Malays, the highest law of the country does not exclude other races who fought for the country’s independence together.

“That’s why the leaders at that time, when drafting the Constitution, stipulated the position of the Malay language, Islam (as) the Federal religion, the rights of privileges of Malays and the sovereignty of the Malay Rulers, but never was it intended to belittle the rights of others, degrading others or insulting them (non-Malays).

“Because they are recognised as legitimate citizens who jointly fought for independence... this is an important lesson for our country,” he said.

— BERNAMA

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