

Muhyiddin's clarion call to M'sians in London
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After 54 years of independence and reaping the benefits of racial harmony, political stability and rapid economic growth, Malaysians were urged to move forward at a faster pace to make the country more competitive globally.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said if Malaysian can leverage on their past successes, overcome all present challenges and thrive in the new global world, they will build a better future for the nation.

Muhyiddin said what needed to be done is to get every Malaysian on board the national journey to a better future where every Malaysian has a important role to play.

"Whether you are Malaysian students studying abroad or Malaysian citizens working abroad, everyone can contribute to the transformation that is progressing in our country at the moment.

"We need your ideas, your creativity and your talents to move the country forward. At the same time, we need to continue with our efforts to strengthen national unity," he said in a speech prior to a dialogue with the Malaysian community, including students, in London.

The forum on '54 Years of Merdeka: Building A Nation, Sharing A Destiny' was moderated by the Malaysian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Zakaria Sulong.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Institute of Ethnic Studies director Dr Shamsul Amri Baharuddin and Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia chief executive Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin were the panellists.

Muhyiddin, who is also the education minister, arrived here for a four-day working visit to the United Kingdom on Thursday, accompanied by his wife, Noorainee Abdul Rahman.

The deputy prime minister said besides moving faster, national unity was the most important recipe for Malaysia's success in the past 54 years, a factor which he said would "always be crucial to the success of the nation in the future."

"In the spirit of 1Malaysia, we have to prove that we are capable of making national unity not only a work in progress, but also a work that is progressing rapidly to reach the final destination where all Malaysians regard Malaysia as their home and share the same destiny."

Rejects attempts to divide the society

As a multiracial country, he said, Malaysia's success story as a nation depended on three important pillars - unity, political and economic prosperity.

"Of course, no one can say that we have achieved full-fledged national unity because national unity has been and will always be a work in progress. It is an aspiration that keeps us moving in the right direction to strengthen the bond nationhood.

"But at the same time, no one can deny that we are now enjoying the fruits of being united. Despite debates on racial and religious issues in our country, which sometimes seem to be quite divisive, Malaysians of all races live peacefully alongside each other," he said.

Muhyiddin said a majority of Malaysians appreciated the value of peace and therefore rejected any attempt to divide and destabilise the society.

"We know that without national unity, there will be no political stability and therefore it will be impossible for the government to focus on efforts to develop the country, manage the economy and serve the people.

"Our experiences over the past decades show that even the ability to deliver economic prosperity depends on how successful we are in maintaining peace and stability," he added.

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