

Unprecedented nationwide prayer for M'sia Day and GE
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In an unprecedented move, churches in Malaysia have come together to hold a nationwide prayer for the Malaysia Day celebration on Sept 16 and the upcoming 13th general election.

The prayer movement dubbed 'Prayer United' was announced on Monday by an interim committee consists of representatives from all Christian groups in Malaysia, including Council of Churches of Malaysia (CCM), National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) as well as those in Sabah and Sarawak.

The nationwide prayer will be held in the churches of all cities and towns on Sept 16 and 17.

According to the announcement, the aim of the joint action is to get all Christians, churches and prayer networks in Malaysia to come together to pray for the church and the nation.

"The first purpose is to set up a united prayer movement for the whole church to coordinate prayer and to enhance unity among Christians.

"The second purpose is to challenge the whole church to pray together for the transformation of society and nation.

"In particular, the focus will be on the two upcoming key national events, namely the National Jubilee celebration beginning on Sept 16, 2012 and the upcoming general election," said the announcement.

More specifically, Christians are to "pray that the upcoming general election will be carried out peacefully and with integrity, and those elected will be honest and able men and women, who sincerely have the country's true and long-term interest in their hearts".

The Jubilee celebration is to usher in the 50th year of Malaysia as a nation together with Sabah and Sarawak. It begins on Sept 16, 2012 and ends on Sept 15, 2013.

Sept 16 marks the anniversary of the formation of Malaysia which include Sabah and Sarawak, whereas Aug 31 celebrates the 55th independence day of Malaya or Peninsular Malaysia.

The demand of Sabah and Sarawak, which have the largest number of Christians, to have Sept 16 or Malaysia Day recognised officially was only fulfilled under the administration of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

It was declared as a public holiday in 2010, followed by the inaugural double celebration of Independence Day and Malaysia Day in 2011.

The announcement revealed that the decision to hold the nationwide prayer movement was reached during a historic meeting on July 5 attended by 19 church and prayer leaders representing most of the major prayer networks in the country.

“There was a general agreement that the country is facing many critical issues and the Church in Malaysia needs to come together in prayer.

“And it was noted that, if the Church is to play a significant role in national transformation, we must take seriously the call to live as a holy people, to strive for genuine unity, and to pour our hearts out in prayer for our nation!”

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