

Let differences strengthen nation as per Tunku's beliefs – PM

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Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said Malaysia's diversity should not undermine intercommunity relations but be harnessed as a strength to build a more prosperous and progressive nation.

He said this is in line with Malaysia's coat of arms motto "Bersekutu Bertambah Mutu" (Unity is Strength), chosen by the Father of Independence, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.

He was speaking at a ceremony to commemorate Tunku, saying the country's first prime minister firmly believed differences could enhance the nation's strength.

Anwar expressed his deep admiration for Tunku, noting that no individual in Malaysia's history has been able to unite the hearts of all races as he did.

"Differences can divide and breed hatred, but Tunku believed from the very beginning that diversity could fortify our nation.

“He consistently championed national unity, first with the states of the Federation of Malaya, and later with Sabah and Sarawak, embracing the diversity of races and cultures...

“Tunku was truly one of the founding pillars of the country’s principles,” Anwar said.

Also present at the event were National Unity Minister Aaron Ago Dagang, Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil, and Tunku Abdul Rahman’s granddaughter, Sharifah Menyalara Hussein.

Tunku’s works

Anwar said Tunku laid a crucial foundation in building the nation through several key principles that are still upheld today.

“Tunku established Malay as the official language, Islam as the religion of the federation, the special privileges of the Malays and bumiputera, as well as the sovereignty of the Malay rulers, which must be preserved,” he said.

The prime minister said while these principles were safeguarded, Tunku also practised inclusivity by considering all ethnicities and cultures in shaping Malaysia’s identity.

Notably, Anwar said Tunku also faced numerous challenges in defending the nation's fundamental principles.

“This is something we must remember because, although what he fought for was generally accepted by the majority of the people, he was not spared from obstacles, criticism, opposition, and attempts to undermine and reject these principles,” he said.

As such, Anwar stressed that the people must continue to uphold the principles laid down by past leaders to ensure that Malaysia remained a united, progressive, and prosperous country.

He also urged the younger generation to better understand and appreciate the struggles of past leaders like Tunku in building a united and stable Malaysia.

In this regard, Anwar said the Tunku Abdul Rahman Memorial could serve as a platform not only to commemorate history but also to foster awareness and provide lessons to the people, particularly the current generation, about sacrifice and unity.

- Bernama

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