

# Raja Nazrin: Defend unique identity

NST-6/4/2007

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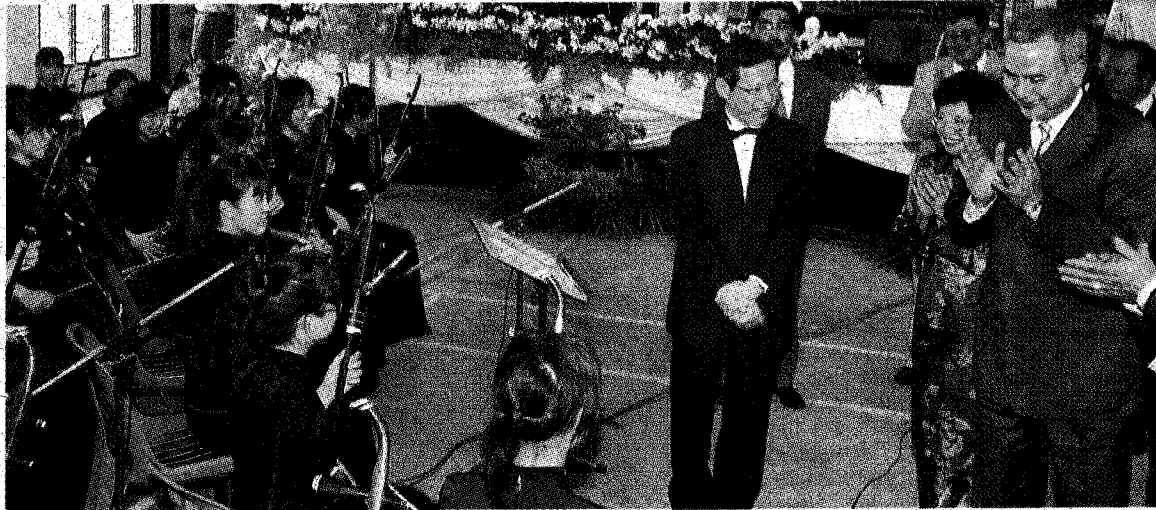
**IPOH:** Malaysians should defend the unique identity that has evolved out of the diversity of races, cultures, languages and religions, Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr Nazrin Shah said.

He also said the success of the nation was based on the harmonious merging of these factors.

"That is Malaysia's nation-state identity, a country approaching 50 years as a sovereign and independent country. This identity has to be defended together," he said at the 50th Speech Day of SMJK Ave Maria Convent, here, yesterday.

Raja Nazrin urged Malaysians to be open-minded, avoid prejudice and reject the voices of extremism in the name of race or religion.

On political stability, he said



Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr Nazrin Shah (right) applauding the Chinese orchestra at the Speech Day.

it was dependent on the level of understanding and co-operation among the races.

"It is important for students to be guided to not only know each other but also to have opportunities to interact with people of diverse backgrounds,

religions and cultures."

While there were immense opportunities for young people, history had shown that the expansion of economic well-being rarely took place without difficulties or turbulence, he said.

"We can expect bumps along the way. Most evidently, despite globalisation breeding connectivity, people seem to be fragmenting into increasingly separate little enclaves.

"Violent and tragic incidents that have taken place across

the globe in recent years are the manifestations of this sense of alienation."

On the pursuit of excellence among Malaysians, he said it needed inquisitive minds to help citizens act wisely in dealing with challenging realities

and political stability based on understanding and co-operation among the races.

He said Malaysians needed originality of thought, a clear perspective, open and inquisitive minds and the ability to analyse objectively.

"Changes would only occur if an inquisitive culture was inculcated, if new ways of thinking were cultivated, if unconventional and imaginative thinking were encouraged and the culture of introducing new approaches was accepted."

He said the nation not only needed students who could give the right answers in test papers but also citizens who could act wisely when faced with challenging situations.

Raja Nazrin later presented awards to the school's top achievers, including special student Tan Bing-Xuan, who suffers from generalised dystonia. He also donated RM100,000 to the school.