

# King: Vital to preserve solidarity at all costs

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The development and administrative success of the country are the fruits of the people's solidarity which must be maintained.

Newly-installed Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin said Malaysia was a blessed nation of racial, religious and cultural diversity. This was not an obstacle but a unique feature to enhance the country's strength and prosperity, he said.

"I admit it's not easy for a multi-racial population to live in peace and harmony. Look around us. Not many are successful; more have failed.

"We must maintain this precious unity to the best we can.

"Coexisting requires us to understand, respect and be tolerant of each other," he said at his installation ceremony as the 13th Yang di-Pertuan Agong at Istana Negara yesterday.

The colourful ceremony, steeped in Malay customs and traditions, was televised live by RTM, TV3 and Astro.

It was attended by the Malay rulers, Yang DiPertua Negeri, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, his deputy Datuk Seri Najib Razak, ministers, foreign diplomats and invited guests.

Tuanku Mizan also called for Malaysia's progress and prosperity to be moulded alongside the country's culture and traditions and balanced with advancement in knowledge.

He said progress did not mean neglecting the value of knowledge, people's cultures and traditions and the national language.

No country could taste progress and record achievements by relying on government initiatives without the support of the people, he added.

"As Malaysians, we must be knowledgeable, cultured and have noble values. We must be loyal and faithful in our obligations to the king and country," he said.

Tuanku Mizan also said the people and country must be proud of the rapid and remarkable progress over the last 50 years of nationhood. Malaysia celebrates its 50th independence anniversary in August.

"As a country considered young, Malaysians have gone far in proving their capabilities in governing the nation.

"If we look around, many countries that gained independence earlier than us are still lagging in various aspects.

"However, this is not an excuse to be boastful because the fact is our journey is still long."

In conveying his gratitude to the prime minister, Tuanku Mizan

called on the government to work harder and intensify efforts to realise the Ninth Malaysia Plan and build a society to boost the country's integrity and dignity in the eyes of the world.

"I follow closely the government's 9MP projects and programmes. I see that the programmes and initiatives drawn up have yielded excellent results."

He said the corridor development initiated by the government was a good idea to bring development to the whole country.

Tuanku Mizan also agreed with the nation's development strategies, mooted by the prime minister, which emphasised the development of first-class human capital.

He said every Malaysian citizen had his/her rights as enshrined in the Federal Constitution and he/she should be given fair and equal opportunities. — Bernama