

# Speak up to preserve democracy: Wan Azizah

■ BY **RAJVINDER SINGH**  
*newsdesk@thesundaily.com*

**PUTRAJAYA:** The voice of reason, the advocacy of kindness and mutual respect as well as the call to unity must prevail over hate mongering and bigotry, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said yesterday.

She said sectarian politics must not be allowed to grow in Malaysia.

The people must speak up and define their identity and democracy, she said.

"Communication must be used to strengthen democracy.

"We must not allow hate mongers and bigots to hijack it," she said in her keynote address at

the opening of a World Communications 2019 workshop.

Otherwise, she said, the voice of hatred and animosity would gain momentum and become like a runaway train that would one day "hurt us all".

Wan Azizah said the people should not waste time trying to debate with bigots and hate mongers but focus on creating a narrative of togetherness, kindness and mutual respect.

She said Malaysians must make this positive narrative the dominant and loudest narrative.

"We must speak out for the sake of preserving our new democracy, for the sake of our hard won freedom, and for the sake of our children.

The Sun - 6/12/2019

"We must not be distracted and derailed by short term problems and issues because pursuing our long-term interest is not going to be a simple journey."

Wan Azizah noted that while it was essential to build a new Malaysia, it was not an easy task.

"It's like riding a canoe for the first time.

"It will twist and turn as we learn how to paddle and steer at the same time," the deputy premier said.

She agreed that Malaysians would have disagreements and at times even get angry with each other, but everyone must persevere.

"We must communicate with one another as we travel on this journey to make sure we reach our destination."

pg. 2