

# CALL FOR 'MALAYSIAN FAMILY' TO UNITE

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Ismail Sabri offers opposition posts on Covid-19 panels as olive branch

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**I**N his maiden address as Malaysia's ninth prime minister, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob called on all members of the Dewan Rakyat to work together towards helping the nation recover from the health and economic crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

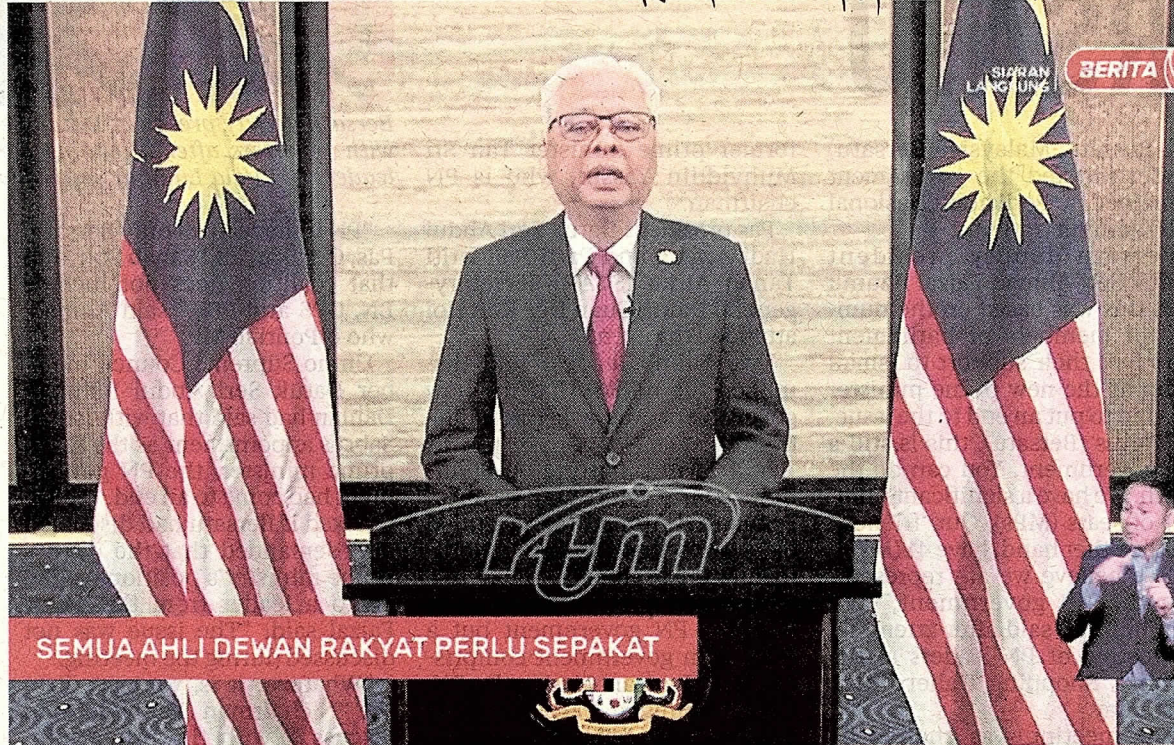
He said this could be achieved if all members of parliament opened their hearts and minds and found common ground.

Describing the nation as a "Malaysian Family", he said this was necessary to move towards building a consensus for the security of the nation.

The Bera MP said he chose the concept of a "Malaysian Family" as it was inclusive and transcended religious, racial and ethnic boundaries.

"We realise the existence of inter-marriage families of various races and religions, and yet possess strong family bonds.

"Thus, the concept of a Malaysian Family is akin to the strength of a nation bound by



Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob delivering his first speech as prime minister, which was broadcast on television yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF RTM

such values.

"We are all a part of a family despite diversity of religion, race and ethnicity. Every single one of you resembles my family.

"We complement and need one another," he said in his speech, aired on major television networks yesterday.

Ismail Sabri also extended his appreciation to Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah

and the Malay rulers for consenting to his appointment as prime minister.

He also paid tribute to his predecessor.

"I would also like to express my utmost appreciation and gratitude to Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, the former prime minister, who had done his best in facing numerous challenges along with the cabinet members of Perikatan Nasional."

The prime minister also extended an olive branch to opposition leaders, inviting them to join his administration's fight against Covid-19.

He said, in line with the decree by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong for all political parties to bury the hatchet, all quarters must work as a team with the new government to persevere harmony.

"We must embrace the spirit of togetherness. I would like to offer

the leadership of the opposition to be part of the National Recovery Council and the Special Committee on Covid-19.

"I understand that the political turmoil has besieged the country and distressed the public.

"Therefore, political stability must be swiftly achieved through togetherness, and this includes cross-party cooperation.

"Together with this government, I will ensure an administrative team that will help our country recover from the economic and health crises.

"I pledge to do my best so that the trust placed in my team and me, is not misplaced," he said.

Ismail Sabri, 61, took his oath of office as prime minister before the Yang di-Pertuan Agong on Saturday.

Ismail Sabri noted that the various changes in governments within three years was detrimental to the people and country.

"Let us move forward. We must stamp out this grab for political power.

"Let us as one big family comprising civil servants, private sector workers, and those self-employed— repair and heal our nation.

"This aspiration can only be attained with the cooperation of the entire civil service, who are the backbone of our administration.

"Let us work together as one big 'Malaysian Family' to restore Malaysia to the prosperity we were once accustomed to."