

Giving a new concept of family

The Star - 24/10/2021 pg. 2

PM launches support programme for kids orphaned by Covid-19

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KUCHING: The newly-launched Yayasan Keluarga Malaysia will provide support for children orphaned by Covid-19, particularly in their education up to the age of 18.

Announcing this, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the foundation was in line with the Malaysian Family concept and a manifestation of Malaysians' care for children affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

He related the circumstances of 19-year-old Nazurah Nabilah Benjaeyeed who now has to look after her seven younger siblings, and Hadrami Hasil, 11, who was left to care for his four siblings after their parents succumbed to Covid-19.

"They are among 5,173 Malaysian children orphaned due to the pandemic, losing not only their parents but the happy moments of growing up as normal children.

"As such, I humbly call on the entire Malaysian family to share their love with these children," Ismail Sabri said when launching the Malaysian Family concept at Borneo Convention Centre Kuching last night.

In future, he said, the foundation



United front: (From left) Sarawak Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg, Ismail Sabri and Communications and Multimedia Minister Tan Sri Annuar Musa at the launch of the Malaysian Family concept in Kuching. — ZULAZHAR SHEBLEE/The Star

would also offer care and support to other Malaysian children in need.

"My hope is that through Yayasan Keluarga Malaysia, no Malaysian child will have to suffer alone."

On the Malaysian Family concept, Ismail Sabri said it was not merely rhetoric but represented the government's commitment to protecting the people's interest and well-being, which is akin to caring for a family.

He said the government would closely monitor the implementation of programmes and initiatives, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, to ensure the whole nation developed together as a family.

Welcoming the concept, Sarawakians called for respect and harmony among all segments of society.

"To me, the concept of Malaysian Family is everyone living as a family regardless of race, language, reli-

gion, status in society or ability, with no discrimination of any sort," said Sarawak Cultural Village (SCV) general manager Jane Lian Labang.

"We must respect each other and don't judge by our differences. We are a family because we have one goal, to live in peace with one another, harmoniously and in a safe environment," she said, adding that leaders must be the champions of the concept.

The SCV is a window into the concept, as it is staffed by people of different cultures living under one roof, she said.

"We are ambassadors of Keluarga Malaysia, and Sarawak is a living example of the concept."

Non-governmental organisation volunteer Alexandra John welcomed the concept of inclusivity, common ground and contentment espoused by the Malaysian Family.

"Working together in harmony, we can provide a voice to the marginalised, end discrimination and be honest in solving our challenges," she said.

For author of children's books Malcolm Mejin, Sarawak's natural and cultural attractions can promote the Malaysian Family agenda through well-planned activities and visits.

"Outdoor excursions to the Bako National Park or visits to the new Borneo Cultures Museum will foster family bonding while showcasing Sarawak's beauty and cultural heritage," he said.



Orphans receive benefits
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