

'Translate words into action for national unity'

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PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim must translate his words and deeds into action to ensure continued unity and prosperity for the nation, say community leaders.

Tawfik Ismail - the son of the country's second deputy prime minister, Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman - said Anwar had touched on his Madani concept and the importance of unity for the nation to move forward.

"The people must have a common interest or common enemy in order to unite.

"Anwar can make racism and religious bigotry the common element to fight against them, but in doing so, he has to define and refine his Madani philosophy," he said when contacted yesterday.

He said it is crucial that the Madani concept be made more comprehensible and meaningful for the rakyat.

"It is this philosophy that he has chosen as his weapon. This is where the communications and national unity ministries have frontline roles to play," added the advocate of moderation.

Malaysian Unity Foundation trustee Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said Anwar must translate his Merdeka message into action as a means to further unite the nation.

"What is important is that the Prime Minister proves by words and deeds that he is a prime minister for all Malaysians.

"If he is prepared to show it by his words and deeds, it will be an important factor that will help galvanise all Malaysians to work towards unity," he said when contacted yesterday.

Lee also agreed with Anwar's call for the rakyat to choose unity over discord during his speech.

Anwar's call for unity in diversity and moderation, he said, would help reduce conflicts while building a strong foundation for the nation's multicultural society.

"It is important today that all Malaysians resolve to stand firm for diversity and moderation.

"Unity is a priceless gift that must be preserved and cherished by all Malaysians in our multicultural society," added Lee.

National Patriots Association president Brig Jen (Rtd) Datuk Mohamed Arshad Raji said besides stressing the importance of unity and working for the good of all Malaysians, Anwar had also spoken on the importance of social justice and economic development.

"I fully agree with the Prime Minister's efforts at forging ahead with whatever policies that are necessary to bring the nation out of its economic and social doldrums.

"We have had a change of three prime ministers in less than four years, which is a historical feat unheard of anywhere in this world.

"They left the nation with a humongous debt where corruption was at its height," he said when contacted yesterday.