

## UNIQUE POSITION

# PM: We can set example of inclusive world

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia must lead the way in setting the example of a more inclusive world where harmony thrives seamlessly amidst the multiplicity of races, religions, nationalities and genders, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In his keynote address at the 2023 Islam-Confucianism Leadership Dialogue (ICLD) conference, the prime minister said the nation's diverse heritage offers a unique perspective and the opportunity to be at the forefront of shaping a new era of global ethical governance.

Malaysia, he said, stands uniquely positioned to be a beacon in this discourse since the country is a nation where major civilisations interact in the mainstream of social and political development.

"This new paradigm, drawing lessons from our (various) rich civilisations, promises to be more inclusive and representative of the global populace.

'As we reflect on the myriad challenges before us, it becomes clear that they all converge on the most fundamental issue of ethics.

"By embracing the wisdom of Islam and Confucianism, we can work towards a future that is not only technologically advanced but also morally enlightened."

Anwar said Confucianism and Islam share similar emphasis on the idea of moral empowerment and the way to its realisation, which is integral to enlightened leadership in both traditions.

"In Confucianism, the way is referred to as 'inner cultivation', which is hardly different from the Quran's *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul).

"Islam has a similar teaching on the intrinsic connection between inner peace and external peace. The key word is Islam itself, which means both submission and peace.

"The idea of *dar al-Islam*,

which means abode of peace, applies to both peace in the heart and peace in society. Both Islam and Confucianism emphasise the pursuit of inner and external peace," he said.

On the 2023 ICLD, Anwar described the dialogue as important and that it cannot be overstated against the backdrop of the global situation where the world is witnessing an alarming resurgence in identity politics.

He said the conference embodies "policy in action".

"By focusing on the points of convergence between Islam and Confucianism, we are actively choosing to diverge from the path of discord.

"Indeed, we are actively turning our backs on the narcissism of small differences so that we can rise above the din and soar to the higher notes of harmony.

"This approach is of paramount importance in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society such as Malaysia," he said.