

PM: Unity can uplift nation

Extreme nationalism, limited knowledge of religion and race will lead to division, says Anwar

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A NARROW understanding of race and religion, as well as extreme nationalism will lead only to division and hatred, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

With this in mind, Anwar wants all communities to save the country from falling into ruin.

A narrow understanding of race and religion does not bring the children of Adam together or raise the dignity of humanity, but only divides and instils hatred," he said, adding that the same could be said of extreme nationalism.

Anwar urged Malaysians to save the country by defending its national unity as its founding fathers had



contributed much to unite its various races and tribes during the Malayan-era.

He said this during the closing ceremony of the national-level Unity Week 2024 celebration here on Saturday.

Present were Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi, National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin.

At the event, Anwar asked the nation's youth to maintain the nation's unity and peace.

"The young generation must not underestimate this [responsibility]. A country can rise because of the spirit of unity, a country can also be destroyed because of division and racism.

"Learn that from now on. This is our strength (diversity of race and religion)," he said.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim greeting people at the national-level Unity Week 2024 celebration in Johor Baru on Saturday. With him is National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang (left). BERNAMA PIC



Meanwhile, Aaron said harmony needed to be preserved, nurtured and inculcated within oneself and then bequeathed to the next generation.

He said unity should be a way of life and practice for all, and it was the main foundation that could strengthen all Malaysians to become citizens with a strong sense of

identity.

"Each of us is responsible and plays a role in maintaining the harmony, sovereignty, peace and security of our country.

"I hope all parties can appreciate the principle of understanding and acceptance in fostering harmony and diversity in Malaysian society."

The celebration took place at Angsana Mall here between May 23 and May 26, and saw many activities to foster unity and harmony among the nation's various races.

Aaron said there were about 50 activities involving various races, including exhibitions by departments, government and private agencies, knowledge sharing ses-

sions through forums and unity discourses, Rahmah sales, cultural performances and sport activities.

A retired teacher from Felda Air Tawar in Kota Tinggi, Nazariah Mohd Tahir, 58, suggested that the Unity Week celebration be held regularly.

"My family and I learned many things about the culture and life of the tribes in Sabah and Sarawak at the exhibitions, including one on the Iban tribe's longhouse villages.

"It is interesting to see the unique way of life, clothes and food of people of other races (in Sabah and Sarawak] because my family has yet to visit both these states."