

# PM: Dialogues on civilisations vital for nation's survival

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Dialogues on civilisations are vital for the nation's survival, particularly in nurturing mutual understanding and appreciation within Malaysia's multiracial society, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said not everyone would appreciate the importance of such dialogues but insisted they were essential.

"Is it easy? No. I can tell you, now that I am entrusted with leading this country, it is not easy. Not many appreciate the need for it.

"But here you have a prime minister who wants to encourage

dialogue between races, religions, and civilisations.

"This is not a political gimmick. I don't believe I stand to gain more votes by promoting this.

"I do it because I believe in it," he said in his keynote address at the 2025 International Conference on Civilisation Dialogue, held at Universiti Malaya's Dewan Tunku Canselor yesterday.

Present were Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagan and Deputy Youth and Sports Minister Adam Adli Abd Halim.

Anwar urged young members

of parliament (MPs) present to become champions of peace, stressing that the values of justice and humanity were deeply embedded in all religious traditions.

"I'm not here to discourage you, but to tell you that this is our challenge.

"It is a challenge for teachers, professors, and universities to promote what is right and what will ensure peace and security in this nation."

He said failing to uphold these ideals would leave the country vulnerable to destructive ideologies, including those masked by labels that brought only harm.

Anwar also tasked renowned

scholar Datuk Dr Osman Bakar, a professor of civilisation studies, with engaging MPs to promote greater understanding between civilisations.

"For the past 30 years, Osman, you've been preaching dialogue. But now, I want you to engage with some MPs who have absolutely no understanding or respect for others.

"Some speeches in Parliament echo the most extreme voices... and the Unity Minister (Aaron) is struggling to foster understanding. Good luck to you — but we cannot fail.

"That's why I'm here today with my colleagues — not just to

speak, but to show our commitment. We cannot afford to fail," he said.

Anwar reaffirmed that Malaysia could only thrive by upholding values that transcended race, such as integrity, good governance, and mutual respect.

"I've said it before: we do not fail because we are friendly. We fail because we tolerate corrupt, irresponsible, and semi-literate leaders who claim to speak on our behalf. That's why we fail.

"We will only succeed when we prioritise reason, respect, good governance, and values that go beyond racial lines," he added.