

# 'Uphold unity as our foundation'

## Rise above any attempts at harmful division, PM reminds Malaysians



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**SERDANG:** Malaysians must reject any attempt to divide the nation along racial, religious or territorial lines, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister stressed that unity has been the cornerstone of Malaysia's success since independence, reminding the people that freedom was won through sacrifices that should never be forgotten.

"There have been countless sacrifices - lives, property, tears. I appeal to the younger generation to learn and know that whatever we have achieved came at a price.

"Our country is unique as it is the only one with various races and religions that has enjoyed lasting peace, economic growth and growing unity," he said in his National Day address at the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang here yesterday.



**Colours of Malaysia:** Anwar greeting children dressed in traditional attire during a National Day celebration at Malaysia Agro Exposition Park, Serdang. - FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

Anwar said no nation can survive if it is torn by racial division, nor can it achieve independence without cooperation and solidarity.

This was among the key messages he delivered as Malaysians across diverse backgrounds come together to celebrate the country's 68th National Day today.

The Prime Minister also

stressed that while every community should take pride in its own heritage, such pride must not come at the expense of others.

"In whatever I speak, I will always be Malay. I am proud of my Malay language, proud of the greatness and grandeur of the Malay culture," he said.

Anwar also said he was proud of well-known Malay intellectuals

such as Raja Ali Haji Raja Haji Ahmad, Tan Sri Zainal Abidin Ahmad (Za'ba), Royal Prof Ungku Abdul Aziz Ungku Abdul Hamid and Syed Muhammad al Naquib Ali al-Attas.

"But it is unreasonable that such pride belittles and erases or even worse, insults the other races. That is why this is not a zero-sum game where to extol the

greatness of the Malays, we insult others.

"Likewise, some in the Chinese community speak of the greatness and grandeur of the Chinese civilisation over a span of several thousand years and try to sideline the nation's strong foundation in language and culture," he said.

Anwar noted that similar pride exists among the Indian community as well as the indigenous peoples of Sarawak and Sabah.

He also reflected on history, pointing out that unity among Malays themselves only emerged with the rise of nationalism before Independence.

"This is the same spirit which binds the Chinese, Indian, Iban, Kadazan, Murut and Bidayuh, and strengthens us all as Malaysians. We need to work hard to safeguard each other's feelings and sentiments," he said.

He further warned against language obsession and religious extremism, saying such elements had contributed to the downfall of other nations.