

**Politicians Must Hold Fast To 'Wassatiyyah' Concept - Chandra  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 26 (Bernama) - Politicians must hold fast to the 'wassatiyyah' (moderation) principles of fairness and balance based on speech and action, said 1Malaysia Foundation chairman Dr Chandra Muzaffar.

"Politicians should not sacrifice fairness and balance just to draw votes from certain races or groups to win elections.

"For them, political power is above everything and the end justifies the means," he said in his keynote address at the National Seminar on Wasatiyyah Understanding and 1Malaysia at Putra World Trade Centre here Saturday.

Also present were Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Ahmad Maslan, who is also Umno information chief and Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam.

Dr Chandra, who is also Professor of Global Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, said the people and government should uphold and practice 'wassatiyyah' via the 1Malaysia concept.

"This is the key to the country's success and secret of peace, racial harmony and social stability."

He said Malaysia is facing challenges to practice 'wassatiyyah' in terms of economic progress and freedom of human rights as it involves public order.

"Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak) is trying to balance this situation via the Economic Transformation Plan (ETP) to aid the low income group and change laws under the Political Transformation Plan."

Dr Chandra urged intellectuals, religious figures, professionals, businessmen, administrators, managers, union leaders and NGO leaders to prove their loyalty to the principles of justice and balance.

"Intellectuals have the big responsibility of fighting narrow mindedness biasness that not only affects justice but also fan elements of racism and chauvinism in society.

"The old and new media must raise public awareness about the importance of justice and balance in the context of a multiracial society.

"The media should strike a balance when reporting specific issues and not only concerned with certain groups."

Dr Chandra said the government must increase efforts to correct the perception that it is unfair.

"All segments of society including the government and NGOs must be ready to make wasatiyyah a reality."

He warned that the "middle path" should not be equated with 'wassatiyyah' as it wants to justify and legitimise corruption or fraud.

"Some people say that a little corruption or abuse does not matter. Wassatiyyah can't be misused to justify acts that are forbidden by religion," he added.

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