

**Common Values Vital In Uniting Malaysians - Dr Chandra Muzaffar**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 1 (Bernama) -- The common values which refer to the principles shared by all religions and cultures are important elements in the formulation of Malaysian identity, according to 1Malaysia Foundation chairman Dr Chandra Muzaffar.

He said the values were vital because only with the similarities, the multi-racial and multi-religious people in the country could live in a peaceful and united manner.

Dr Chandra, who is also a lecturer in Global Studies at Universiti Sains Malaysia, however, felt that the Malaysian people hardly gave focus to that values, an attitude that could be hamper racial unity.

"The common values, such as family institution, respect for parents, justice, mercy and freedom, are promoted and shared by all cultures and religions in Malaysia, but they are rarely given much attention.

"Yes, there is an effort to promote the values in our education syllabus, but it is insufficient. That is what we should focus on now," he told reporters after delivering a keynote address at the Intercultural Dialogue here Wednesday.

The one-day dialogue was organised jointly by 1Malaysia Foundation and the Association of Voices of Peace, Conscience and Reason (PCORE) with the aim to exchange knowledge on the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in Malaysia.

It was graced by the Sultanah of Johor Raja Sofiah Sultan Idris Shah, who is also PCORE Patron.

When asked about partisan politics, Dr Chandra said it was a new challenge that resulted in creating more significant differences among the people.

"Nowadays, our stand as a supporter or a member of certain political party and our ways of handling other things which have nothing to do with politics, are mostly influenced by partisan political considerations," he added.

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