

**Empower Bahasa Melayu As Language Of Knowledge, Progress - Muhyiddin Bernama  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin today opened the 8th Malay Literary and Language Congress with a call to the people to empower Bahasa Melayu as a language of knowledge and progress while learning other languages to master the knowledge available in those languages.

He said language advocates had an important role to play in empowering Bahasa Melayu by fostering a positive attitude in the people towards the national language.

"Language advocates should not act as a mere pressure group but must go down to the ground, to be with the people, and be the drivers of awareness for the multiracial population to gain confidence in the ability of Bahasa Melayu as a language of knowledge and progress," said Muhyiddin, who is also education minister.

Intellectuals should intensify efforts to bring out works in Bahasa Melayu besides coining terminology for science and technology in the language, he said.

"The government, on its part, will strengthen the role of the National Translation Institute which will step up efforts to translate quality international academic books to expand the treasure of knowledge in Bahasa Melayu," he said.

Muhyiddin also suggested that the Malay Language Campus of the Institute of Teacher Education, the Malay Studies Academy of Universiti Malaya and the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka collaborate to offer training and courses in Bahasa Melayu as an international language.

"Digital technology can be harnessed to offer these courses online in an effort to ensure wider and easier access as well as to make them cost-effective," he said.

The deputy prime minister said the government would also send Bahasa Melayu teachers abroad and train Malaysians overseas to be "munsyi" (instructors) in Bahasa Melayu beginning next year.

Muhyiddin said society should learn from history how the Europeans at one time learned Arabic to master the knowledge available in that language without degrading the ability of their own language which they took great pride in, he said.

"The Europeans then used their own language to enrich the knowledge they had gained. They produced great works in their own language, and set up universities to teach the knowledge gained using European languages.

"Today, Europeans do not have to learn Arabic to master knowledge, especially in science and technology. They have all the knowledge they need in their own languages.

"They spread the knowledge throughout the world and, eventually, the Europeans have become a developed race and their languages have become progressive," he said.

The Malay Literary and Language Congress was organised by the Federation of National Writers Associations (Gapena) and Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

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