

PM Urges Malaysians To Learn And Accept Each Other Despite The Differences
Bernama
May 29, 2012

KUALA LUMPUR, May 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has urged Malaysians of different ethnicities, whether Malay, Chinese, Indian or others, to learn from their "humble brothers and sisters" in east Malaysia.

He said that if they can learn to accept and celebrate each other despite the differences, Malaysia can move forward with the united purpose of growing and prospering in peace and harmony.

"As prime minister, it touches me to know that Malaysians of the Borneo region can come together in fellowship and celebrate the coming of a new harvest despite the differences faced," he said in the latest posting on his blog www.1malaysia.com.my Tuesday.

Wishing the Kadazandusun and their sub-groups who celebrate Tadau Kaamatan on May 30 and 31 in Sabah as well as the Dayak communities of Sarawak who mark the renewal of their rice-growing seasons on June 1 and 2 with Gawai Dayak, Najib said that as a multicultural nation of various ethnicities, he believes that Malaysians have much to learn from "our eastern brothers and sisters".

"Before the harvest festivals came into their current state of being, different groups and villages observed harvest rituals at different times of the year, depending on the rice cultivation cycle.

"In the interests of allowing different ethnic groups and villages to celebrate together, indigenous and community leaders gathered together to agree on a joint date for celebration," he said.

Najib said that in Sabah, the harvest event came into its own in 1960, after first being incorporated into the annual "Tamu Besar" while in Sarawak, discussions between community leaders and the government resulted in June 1 being chosen as the date for the official harvest festival.

"It was the common desire of the various groups in Sabah and Sarawak, from the Murut to the Orang Sungai and the Iban to the Bidayuh, to combine under the festivals of Kaamatan and Gawai that have led to the unity of numerous individual groups," he said.

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