

**Malaysia-Indonesia Close Ties To Be Nurtured - Rais**  
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**By Ahmad Fuad Yahya**

JAKARTA, Sept 6 (Bernama) -- The close ties between Malaysia and Indonesia will continue to be nurtured in the spirit of mutual love, says Information Communications and Culture Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim.

Via a new body called Malaysia-Indonesia People's Friendship Foundation (YIRMI), more programmes on language, culture and history will be implemented to strengthen ties between the people.

"We will find ways to nurture the Nusantara concept for the sake of our common language, culture, history and interest," said Rais at a dinner to mark 55th Merdeka Day celebration at a leading hotel here last night.

Some 1,000 guests including Indonesian Cabinet ministers, members of parliament, foreign diplomats and corporate members attended the dinner.

Rais who is the celebration chairman and founder of YIRMI also congratulated Indonesia on its independence anniversary on August 17.

He also congratulated Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and leaders of the two countries for their good deeds.

Speaker of Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly, Taufik Kiemas congratulated Malaysia on its 55th Merdeka Day anniversary and hopes that the good ties will continue.

"If there are problems, I hope that we can discuss in a good way," he added.

Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Syed Munshe Afdzaruddin Syed Hassan said the presence of Indonesian leaders at the dinner symbolised the good ties.

The good ties would continue to be preserved via the settlement of bilateral issues to prevent it from being exploited by parties out to disrupt them.

He said bodies such as Eminent Persons Group, Malaysia-Indonesia friendship associations and YIRMI can forge closer ties between people of both countries.

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