

Unity Of All Races In Malaysia Has Ensured Its Sovereignty, Says Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 29 (Bernama) -- With the approach of Malaysia's 55th Independence Anniversary, Malaysians should not forget that unity of all the races in the country has ensured Malaysia's sovereignty, without which the country would not be what it is today, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The prime minister said there was much to be learned from the lessons brought forth by the country's forefathers and "let us never forget that it was the unity of our Malay, Chinese and Indian ancestors, and not any one race alone that pushed back the communist insurgents and drove them out".

"Let us never forget that we stood with the Iban/Dayak and Kadazan/Dusun people of Sabah and Sarawak, as the nation rose from the backwardness of colonialism.

"Let us never forget it was as a country standing as one, with the greatest minds from all specialities and all walks of life coming together to propel us to the top of the global pile," said Najib in his 1Malaysia blog entry titled "55 Years of Development Through Harmony", here, Wednesday.

"We celebrate Merdeka in remembrance of those actions and lessons which have brought us our sovereignty, without which Malaysia would not be what it is today.

"To me, standing above all else is 1Malaysia, for it is this which symbolises everything that has contributed greatest to our country's wellbeing.

"Regardless of ethnicity or religion, race or creed, I ask all Malaysians to cherish the road our multiracial history has taken us," he said in conjunction with the country's Merdeka Day celebration this Friday.

Najib said it was through this spirit of togetherness which 1Malaysia embodied that allowed Malaysians to achieve more towards a brighter future.

"And remember that we have walked together down this road these past 55 years. After all, there is much we can be proud of. How many countries can boast of having citizens of

diverse ethnicities coming together for teh tarik at the local Mamak (eatery) to watch the Olympics and cheer our athletes, celebrate sports and our nation as one," he added.

Najib also said that there was much about Malaysia's development that Malaysians should be proud of.

"Our economy is growing at a strong and steady pace, while growth around much of the world is either flat or falling. Our capital markets are reaching record highs as the global markets continue to struggle, with FGVH and IHH Healthcare recording the world's second and third largest listings.

"And our success is reflected in the global rankings - we have the 15th most efficient goods market, we are placed 26th in terms of developed infrastructure, and we stand as the 18th most competitive economy," he added.

The prime minister said much of the country's progress and prosperity could be attributed to the country's forefathers "and we should be thankful to them for it".

"Alongside the British, they fought valiantly against the communists and quashed the extremism that threatened our way of life. They then secured our independence from colonialism, granting us full control over the resources that have featured strongly in our economic growth: rubber, tin, palm oil and iron ore," said Najib.

He said these commodities became the backbone of the country's thriving export industry, providing Malaysia with the means to invest in the country's infrastructure and industrial development.

"In the years that followed, we grew from simple townships to large, sprawling metropolises, housing some of our greatest architectural and structural achievements."

Najib said that in 1996, the opening of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport established Malaysia as a top international travel hub, and two years later, the rise of the Petronas Twin Towers changed the face of the country's skyline.

"And more than a decade later, they still stand as the tallest twin buildings in the world and home to Suria KLCC, Malaysia's iconic retail destination," he said.

He said from technology to entertainment, they all in some way symbolised the country's development and Malaysians should all be proud of them and what they stood for.

"With pride over these accomplishments also came revenue. Locally, businesses could perform more efficiently as we embraced technological advancements, both online and off," he said.

Najib said as economic conditions improved, so did social ones with the quality of education growing and becoming more accessible to everyone.

The increased availability of electricity and water allowed the rural areas to operate outside their usual limitations, and as business and services became more widespread, the rakyat no longer had to travel long distances to shop, pay their bills or even watch the latest movies, he added.

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