

**Celebrate Merdeka Day as one, urge leaders**  
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PETALING JAYA: Political leaders from both sides of the divide have called on Malaysians to set aside their differences and celebrate independence as one community.

MIC president Datuk Seri G. Palanivel said Merdeka Day should be celebrated with pride and honour.

"Once again, in celebrating the 55th Merdeka Day, we need to summon the spirit that was in our first Merdeka Day 55 years ago. We have to rediscover the spirit that has defined our past and that will lead us to the future," he said here yesterday.

He said this year's National Day theme "Promises Fulfilled" (Janji Ditepati) was also in the interest and aspirations of all Malaysians and not just for one community or race.

"It is now 55 years after Independence and we should continue to show that we are serious in our endeavour to lead the nation towards progress, stability, and prosperity for all and not only for selected groups," he said.

DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang said all Malaysians should celebrate the 55th Merdeka Day as "one Malaysian people".

"Any partisan attempt to hijack Merdeka Day, which can only result in greater division, dissension and disunity, must be deplored," he said.

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