

**Young Must Foster Spirit Of Appreciating, Respecting Cultural And Religious Diversity**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 8 (Bernama) -- The spirit of appreciating and respecting the diversity in culture and religion must always be fostered among the young generation, specifically those who are still schooling.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said, such spirit was crucial to ensure stability and harmony towards achieving better and sustainable progress and development.

"Appreciating and respecting the diversity in culture and religion is actually an important asset or advantage which we should be proud of, and continue to defend.

"So, it is apt that the young generation be continuously imbued with the spirit of appreciating and respecting the principles of the Federal Constitution, understanding Rukunegara, understanding existing difference in culture, and appreciating and practising census and goodwill among them," he said.

He said this in his speech at a ceremony to launch the education ministry's school-level World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Seksyen 3, Bandar Kinrara near here Friday.

He said, if the young, who were regarded as the back-up generation, were not united and did not have a common vision and mission, the stability currently enjoyed would be threatened.

"The gap between communities and religions among the young generation will become wider, if the tendency towards unity is not fostered from an early stage, especially at school level.

"If allowed to continue, they will go their separate ways and it will become more severe when the value of existing harmony is unravelled and destroyed," he said.

The WIHW celebration was attended by about 1,000 students who performed numerous integration games and cultures of the country's multi-racial society.

WIHW is the brainchild of the King of Jordan, King Abdullah II.

It became a resolution adopted by the United Nations (UN) to be celebrated in the first week of February every year, by member nations.

Malaysia celebrated WIHW for the first time in February 2011, as organised by the UN.

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