

**Harness Strength Of Ethnic Diversity To Enhance Unity, Says Muhyiddin
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KOTA KINABALU, Jun 30 (Bernama) -- The people should harness the strength of ethnic diversity and unique cultural heritage to enhance unity, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said people should not allow irresponsible groups to take advantage to create a conflict between the people and disrupt unity that was built over the years.

"The prosperity and harmony among the people will prevail if cooperation between various races is nurtured.

"Of late, our country is saddled with challenges than could threaten stability such as street protests which could lead to property damage and cause injuries to the detriment of the country and the people," he said when opening the Tadau Kaamatan Malaysia Open House here Sunday.

Muhyiddin said the people should come together to protect and defend unity to sustain the good life, well-being and prosperity to enable the country to develop politically, economically, socially and culturally.

"We should learn from what we have achieved in the past to enable us to lay a foundation for unity as a strong pillar that will take the nation towards a more progressive future," he said.

On Tadau Kaamatan or the Sabah's harvest festival, he said the festival, which was steeped in tradition, should thrive as it contributed to the country's cultural diversity that could be shared in the march towards national integration.

"Annual festivals like Tadau Kaamatan are not just for fun, but also to express gratitude for the blessings received," he said, adding that they also helped strengthen unity among the people and enhance Malaysia's image as a vibrant, interactive and dynamic tourist destination.

Muhyiddin, who was accompanied by his wife, Puan Seri Noorainee Abdul Rahman witnessed 'mipulos', a traditional hand wrestling competition and visited various traditional houses.

Present were Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman, Tourism and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abd Aziz and Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan, who is also Kadazandusun paramount chief.

The audience was later entertained to traditional dances and songs by singer Jamal Abdillah and Jimmy Palikat, and a puppet show by WanRull Puppet.

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