

**Voices Urging Sabah To Secede Will Affect Unity - Muhyiddin  
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SIPITANG, Aug 30 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said voices urging that effort be made to take out Sabah from Malaysia will adversely affect the spirit of cooperation, security and unity of the people.

The government did not want to hear voices raised by a small group stridently claiming there was no development in Sabah and urging effort be made to take Sabah out of Malaysia.

"The effort is opposed to the national and state constitutions.

"It is seditious in nature and if allowed to go on will affect the prevailing spirit of cooperation, security and unity in Sabah," he said when officiating the Sipitang International Gata Festival here, Saturday.

Also present was Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman and Sipitang Member of Parliament Datuk Sapawi Ahmad.

In this regard, Muhyiddin said the voices should not be tolerated and stringent action would be taken against them for trying to create such a situation.

He said this was to ensure Sabah continued to stay as an important state in Malaysia and continued to enjoy progress and development in the future.

In the meantime, Muhyiddin said the government solidly backed the holding of arts and culture festivals in the country which displayed philosophies which could foster communal unity.

He said the country would not achieve economic development if the people were not united.

Countries which were constantly in states of turbulence would create many problems and losses to all, including potential tourists, said the deputy prime minister.

"A large portion of the national income will be gone if the country is in a state of turbulence to simultaneously thwart effort to develop the nation in line with the aspiration to become a developed nation by 2020," he said.

In this regard, he said the festival could not only help promote Sipitang as a tourism centre but also attract local and foreign investors.

"I am confident the festival will also contribute towards effort to conserve cultures and

traditions, especially among the new generation.

"If we notice, many of our traditions and treasures are becoming extinct. This is indeed a loss because we are losing more and more of our identities as a race which is repleted with traditional customs and cultures," he said.

According to Muhyiddin, the situation was becoming more acute lately due to increasing foreign influences.

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