



Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute
Dedicated To Creating A Better Society

Merdeka Message
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“UNITY IS OUR TRUE NORTH”

With Merdeka Day approaching, it is time again to reflect and ponder how far we have come in the journey of nation-building. Even as the years go by, and despite setbacks and trials, we are reminded of how blessed Malaysia is every time our independence is celebrated. Our beloved nation has withstood the test of time despite the complex challenges of the early years when the founding fathers were faced with the task of uniting the country. When the nation faced tremendous challenges, we quickly picked ourselves up and moved forward. We had the tenacity to push forward ways to strengthen and improve relations and well-being of the respective communities. Today in the 21st century, Malaysia can truly stand tall and proud as a nation that is well developed and poised for greater heights, including embracing the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the Age of Digitalisation since the foundations of peace and tolerance that were laid sixty-two years ago remain unshaken.

Let us, therefore not forget our heritage and past struggles that enabled us to overcome and be the shining example of a successful and progressive multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-cultural society, that is the essence, hallmark and identity of our nation. As such, we should maintain the peace and harmony as well as continue to embrace our diversity. We should rise above our differences and ensure social and economic stability of the country is maintained. Unity should be our true north in all that we do. We need to be always pressing on with the notion of our uniqueness as ***Bangsa Malaysia***. We should go back to the days when Malaysians were ‘colour-blind’ – that we were not divided by race. Malaysians ought to stay united and embrace our heterogeneity. Our hope, dreams and aspirations should not be just for ourselves but for our children and future generations.

We in ASLI are playing an active role in nation-building by providing a credible platform where all voices can be heard and robust debate can be conducted in a civil manner. The interests and welfare of the *rakyat* is always paramount. Our goal is to create thought-provoking and intellectual dialogues among government, businesses, civil society and academia in Malaysia in an effort to influence and bring change in public policy for the betterment of all *rakyat*. Let us forge ahead to build a prosperous and progressive Malaysia.

Selamat Hari Merdeka!

Sayanggi Malaysiaku!