



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL UNITY

SPEECH

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MINISTER OF NATIONAL UNITY**

NATIONAL WESAK CELEBRATION 2026

Salam Perpaduan dan Salam Malaysia MADANI.

1. First First and foremost, I would like to convey the sincere apologies of the Honourable Minister of National Unity, who is unable to be with us today due to prior commitments in his constituency in Kanowit, Sarawak, in conjunction with the Gawai celebrations. I am honoured to read his speech on his behalf, and he has asked me to extend his warm regards and best wishes to everyone gathered here for this meaningful convention.
2. On behalf of the Ministry of National Unity, I would also like to extend our **heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the Malaysian Buddhist Consultative Council (MBCC)** and the organising committee for their dedication and hard work in making this **National Convention on Buddhist Principles and MADANI Practices** a reality.
3. This convention, **jointly organised by the Ministry of National Unity and the Ministry of Transport**, reflects the Government's strong commitment towards fostering greater understanding, harmony, and cooperation among Malaysians from all walks of life.

4. The objective of this convention is both timely and important. It serves as a platform for dialogue, reflection, and **engagement on how Buddhist values and MADANI principles can contribute towards building a more compassionate, inclusive, and harmonious Malaysia**. Through such platforms, we strengthen mutual understanding, encourage constructive engagement, and reinforce the spirit of togetherness that has long defined our nation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. **Malaysia is often described as a “salad bowl”, a nation where diverse ethnicities, languages, cultures, and religions coexist while preserving their unique identities**. This diversity is what makes Malaysia truly special and unique in the world.

6. Few countries possess the richness that Malaysia has. We are home to many ethnic groups and hundreds of sub-ethnic communities, each contributing to the beauty and strength of our national identity. **Our diversity is not a weakness; rather, unity in diversity is our greatest strength**.

7. **Recognising the importance of preserving harmony, the Ministry of National Unity introduced the Harmoni MADANI initiative in 2024**. This initiative aims to strengthen understanding

and social cohesion through the values of “**Faham, Hormat, Terima dan Meraikan**” — to understand, respect, accept, and celebrate our differences.

8. These values are essential because unity and harmony cannot be taken for granted. **In today’s increasingly complex and interconnected world, misunderstandings and divisions can easily arise if we fail to nurture mutual respect, empathy, and a spirit of tolerance among our people.** The rapid spread of information through social media and digital platforms also means that misinformation, prejudice, and negative sentiments can spread quickly if not managed wisely.

9. This is why efforts to strengthen harmony must continue consistently at every level of society within our families, schools, workplaces, places of worship, and communities. **Harmony is the foundation of peace, stability, economic progress, and national prosperity.** Investors are attracted to stable societies, communities flourish when there is trust, and future generations benefit when people are able to live and work together peacefully. Without unity, it becomes difficult for any nation to move forward successfully or achieve sustainable development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

10. **Interfaith dialogue and engagement remain key pillars in strengthening national unity.** Platforms such as today's convention allow us to build bridges of understanding and trust between communities. They provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds and beliefs to engage openly, learn from one another, and appreciate the shared values that unite us as Malaysians.
11. Such dialogues are important because many misunderstandings arise not from hatred, but from a lack of interaction and understanding. When communities communicate sincerely and respectfully, we create stronger social bonds and reduce the space for prejudice, suspicion, and division.
12. **At a time when many parts of the world are facing growing polarisation, conflict, and intolerance, Malaysia must continue to champion moderation, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence.** We must protect and preserve the harmony that generations before us have worked so hard to build.

13. The values embedded within the MADANI framework are crucial in guiding us towards becoming a progressive, compassionate, and resilient society. **MADANI encourages us to uphold values such as respect, sustainability, compassion, innovation, and inclusivity in our daily lives and in nation-building efforts.**
14. **The Government remains firmly committed to the agenda of nation-building, or Negara Bangsa, where every Malaysian feels included, respected, and valued regardless of background, ethnicity, or faith.** This aspiration can only be achieved when all sectors of society work together in the spirit of unity, mutual understanding, and shared responsibility.

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. I understand that the Malaysian Buddhist Consultative Council has also presented a **Memorandum of Aspirations** to the Ministry. The Ministry appreciates the constructive views and recommendations put forward. **We will carefully study the memorandum and engage in further discussions where necessary to ensure that the aspirations highlighted can be meaningfully considered.**

16. I would once again like to thank the Malaysian Buddhist Consultative Council, all organisers, participants, and stakeholders for your commitment towards promoting harmony, understanding, and national unity. May this convention continue to inspire greater collaboration and strengthen the bonds that unite us as Malaysians. Thank you.