

15 September, 2020

GBM 2020 Malaysia Day Message

Gabungan Bertindak Malaysia (GBM) would like to wish all Malaysians a Happy Malaysia Day. While Malaysia Day is celebrated every year, this year's celebration is unique in several regards.

Firstly, this year marks a full decade since Malaysia Day was made a national public holiday in 2010. It also marks 20 years since the Malaysia Day was made part of the independence celebration in 2000, during which for the first time ever, the one month period from 17th August to 16th

September was designated as Merdeka Month, which ensured that both Merdeka Day on 31st

August and Malaysia Day on 16th

September were celebrated as part of our commemoration of independence.

In the past 20 years and more so the last 10 years, the celebration of Malaysia Day has helped to bring awareness to the general public that Malaysia was formed as a result of merger of between Malaya, North Borneo (now Sabah), Sarawak and Singapore. It also helps to bring attention to the issues related to the Malaysia Agreement 1963 and the issues related to Sabah and Sarawak particularly in the area of unfair treatment and the lack of economic development. We hope this awareness will continue with the realisation that Sabah and Sarawak as partners in the federation will be given due attention and a fair share in the country's development.

Secondly, this year's Malaysia Day is also special in that this is the Malaysia Day celebrated in the year 2020, the year in which we are supposed to achieve Vision 2020 and become a fully developed country. We probably had imagined in the past that the Merdeka Day and Malaysia Day in 2020 would be triumphant celebrations of our entrance into the club of advanced economies. Alas, the dream remains a dream. Instead, what dominated our social media radar in the period between Merdeka Day and Malaysia Day this year were the news of water disruptions followed by flash flood in Klang Valley and the news of two deputy ministers questioning the validity of the story behind Veveonah Mosibin, a foundation student of Universiti Malaysia Sabah, who made headlines after a video of her climbing a tree to gain better internet access to sit for an online examination during the Movement Control Order (MCO).

While we probably didn't think or imagine we will really have flying cars by year 2020, we also wouldn't have expected that we would still be struggling at things that should not be a problem. Disruption to reliable water supply, good flood control system and decent nationwide Internet connection should not have become issues of concerns. Perhaps in moving forward, it is necessary to rethink and wean off our obsession with mega projects and skyscrapers and instead adopt a "back to basic" approach in ensuring we would not fail in the basic things that matter.

Thirdly, this year's Malaysia Day celebration falls in the campaigning period of the state election of Sabah, with Sarawak state election and national general election looming in the horizon. This being the first major election held since our first change of federal government in May 2018, we hope all parties will compete fairly and do their best to win by convincing the voters that they are the best choice to rule the state. We are hopeful the Election Commission (EC) will do their utmost to ensure a free and fair election to the benefit of the people of Sabah rather than for unwarranted parties.

Lastly, this is also a Malaysia Day held in the "new normal" under the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO), which has been extended until 31st December. We call on all Malaysians to remain vigilant and not letting our guard down in fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic.

The year 2020 might not be the year we become a developed country. But as a federation of states in a nation-state setting, our common aspiration of a strong, united and prosperous Malaysia should remain. The quest for national unity towards a common destiny for the common good for all must ever more be cherished if we are to maintain Malaysia as a truly rainbow nation. While recognising that there are many social deficits that hinder or threatened to derail this aspiration of ours, Malaysians of all walks of life must guard this precious heritage coming from our first independence and subsequently at the founding of the Federation of Malaysia. 2020 may well be remembered in the annals of history as the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, but for Malaysians, we could all make the year a memorable one in our history books in which Malaysians from all walks of life standing together in unity amidst our diversity to face adversity and ultimately prevailing.

Selamat Hari Malaysia.

Issued by

Badlishah Sham Baharin,

Chair,

Gabungan Bertindak Malaysia (GBM)

For and on behalf of the Executive Council, GBM

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Gabungan Bertindak Malaysia(GBM)

Plan of Action for Malaysia (PoAM)

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Together We Build A Better Malaysia!