

LANGUAGE: THE NATION'S SOUL

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أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ مُحَمَّدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ .

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَوْصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The creation of human beings of various ethnicities and languages is among the signs of the greatness of Allah the Almighty. Every nation is endowed with a language as a tool to communicate with each other in order to live in harmony. Language also plays a major role in the formation of a nation's civilization.

That is why a language is said to be the soul of a nation and has been expressed in the Malay proverb “*Bahasa melambangkan bangsa, Bahasa jiwa bangsa*” which can be translated as “Language symbolizes the nation, the language is the soul of the nation”.

Islam enjoins its believers to speak with good manners because it reflects one's level of faith and piety. Allah the Almighty said in the Quran in Chapter 30 (*Surah al-Rum*) verse (ayat) 22:

عَاوِذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

Which means: “Another of His signs is the creation of the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your languages and skin colours. There truly are signs in this for those who know.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The government has designated Malay as the national language, official language and the main medium of communication in the country. So we must all strengthen the use of our language by using the Malay language well and correctly in accordance with its status as the national language, official language, language of knowledge and language of culture. The Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) said in a *Hadith* narrated by Imam al-Tabrani which means: “The reasons one enters Paradise are feeding people, greeting each other (spreading salam), and using good words.”

Malay language should be used widely at all levels such as for correspondence, in official functions, etc. all the way to the international level. All signboards, advertisements and names of housing areas must also use correct Malay language and *Jawi* writing.

We should be proud that the Malay language is being spoken by more than 250 million people in the world and has become one of the languages offered to be studied in 118 institutions of higher learning throughout the world. The main purpose of the policy

'Dignifying the Malay Language and *Jawi* script' is to make Malay language a tool of unity, the main language of communication for Malaysians and the language of knowledge.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Language plays a big role in building the *ummah* (Muslim nation). It acts as a tool to spread the religion, a tool of unity, a tool to improve the economy and a tool for education and culture. History proves that language plays a role in the spread and strengthening of religion. We must defend the Malay language because it is the official language of the country. It is very likely that there will be certain parties who will try to replace Malay as the official language of the country if we do not care or underestimate the use of Malay.

Language can also be a tool of communication between races, so it is appropriate that Malay language is recognized as the official language in this country.

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ .