

Malaysia Madani in the light of Islamic Values: Understanding and Acceptance of Malaysians

Malaysia Madani berdasarkan Nilai Islam: Pemahaman dan Penerimaan Masyarakat Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia Madani is a policy framework and government slogan established under the leadership of Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's tenth prime minister. The concept mainly encompasses sound governance, sustainable development, and racial harmony in the country. It incorporates ihsan, respect, creativity, sustainability, well-being, and confidence. These six principles will assist Malaysian society in practising compassion in daily life. This concept is especially important since it needs to be introduced and embraced by all folks in Malaysia, regardless of their background. This research sought to gather insights into Malaysians' perceptions of the Malaysia Madani concept to support the government's agenda. It also attempts to examine their acceptance of the Malaysia Madani concept. Moreover, the study aims to assess the extent of confidence and trust in the ability of current Malaysian leaders to implement the Malaysia Madani concept. This quantitative study involved 451 participants from a public university in Malaysia, including students and educators. The findings revealed that even the highly educated group was not fully informed about the Malaysia Madani concept. Thus, the government should adopt more proactive measures to acquaint all Malaysians with the Malaysia Madani concept, ensuring a better understanding of the government's agenda. Being well-informed will aid in the successful implementation of the policy.

Keywords: Malaysia Madani; Islamic values; Malaysian

ABSTRAK

Malaysia Madani ialah rangka kerja dasar dan slogan kerajaan yang ditubuhkan oleh kepimpinan Anwar Ibrahim, iaitu Perdana Menteri Malaysia yang kesepuluh. Konsep ini terutamanya merangkumi tadbir urus yang mantap, pembangunan mampan dan keharmonian kaum di negara ini. Ia menggabungkan ihsan, rasa hormat, kreativiti, kelestarian, kesejahteraan, dan keyakinan. Enam prinsip ini akan membantu masyarakat Malaysia dalam mengamalkan sifat belas kasihan dalam semua tindakan seharian. Konsep ini amat penting kerana ia perlu diperkenalkan dan dihayati oleh semua orang di Malaysia tanpa mengira latar belakang mereka. Dalam menyokong agenda Kerajaan, kajian ini dijalankan bertujuan untuk mendapatkan pandangan tentang konsep Malaysia Madani dalam kalangan rakyat Malaysia. Ia juga cuba mengkaji penerimaan mereka terhadap konsep Malaysia Madani. Selain itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan tahap keyakinan dan kepercayaan yang mereka miliki berhubung kapasiti pemimpin Malaysia untuk melaksanakan konsep Malaysia Madani dengan jayanya. Kajian kuantitatif ini melibatkan N=451 peserta dari sebuah universiti awam di Malaysia, termasuk pelajar dan pendidik. Penemuan kajian mendedahkan para peserta tidak memahami sepenuhnya tentang konsep Malaysia Madani. Ini menggesa pihak Kerajaan untuk mengambil langkah yang lebih proaktif dalam membiasakan semua rakyat Malaysia dengan konsep Malaysia Madani, bagi memastikan mereka memahami agenda kerajaan dengan lebih baik. Ini pada akhirnya akan menyumbang kepada kejayaan pelaksanaan dasar tersebut.

Kata kunci: Malaysia Madani; nilai Islam; rakyat Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

The political and administrative landscape of Malaysia has changed after the 15th general election. A new political alignment through a unity government based on a combination of several different parties has been mandated to rule the country. Malaysia is basically a country rich in racial and religious harmony. Multi-racial communities regardless of religion, age and gender have lived peacefully in this country since its independence. However, the good image and reputation of this nation is seen to be slightly tarnished by political polemics and poor governance among the previous administrators.

Through the change in the country's leadership pattern that is taking place, many parties especially the people of the community have put high hopes that this country will be restored and become glorious again, in all terms especially economy, culture, and universal well-being.

Anwar Ibrahim, a name that is very familiar in the country, as well as at the global level. He is known as a figure with a strong political background and desire to reform the country. As he was appointed as the Malaysia 10th Prime Minister, a great responsibility was handed to him, to reestablish the glory and harmony of the country. A big question, however, came to surface, as to assert how and in what ways this government is going to ensure that the recovery plan will be comprehensively and effectively carried out.

From the Islamic revivalism time, it can be seen that Muslims in Malaysia also have focused more on the religion and taken into consideration the Islamic principles and values as a guideline or fundamental to solving their everyday life matters. With that, people have seen that Malaysia has been governed and led under different policies. This is rather a normal process to happen in a democratic country in which the leader or Prime Minister of the country is changed in accordance with the result of the election carried out.

In this regard, the previous Prime Ministers have put forward a few policies or administrative framework as the fundamental to governing the country namely Islam Hadhari, 1 Malaysia, and *Keluarga Malaysia*. These frameworks or policies have also changed along with the Prime Minister in-charge.

One of the once very popular concepts was Islam Hadhari, which was coined by Tun Abdullah

bin Ahmad Badawi who served as the 5th Prime Minister of Malaysia back in 2004. Islam Hadhari is in tandem to the modern era needs, on the relevancy of the Islamic maxims of the teaching of Islam to help solve the problems or issues of the modern Muslim ummah today. Its main principles, which are, believing and obeying (taqwa) towards Allah, fair and just government system, independence of soul (of the people), acquisition of knowledge, balance and comprehensive economic development, quality standard of life, protection of women's rights and minority group, uphold morality and ethics, and so on – are in accordance with the teaching of the Quran and Sunnah.

The resurgence of Islamic-based administrative framework has happened as Anwar Ibrahim introduced the Malaysia Madani concept, as the new framework of reform policy of the country. The concept mainly deals with sound governance, sustainable development, and racial harmony in the country as a whole.

It is important for the current government to deliver the policy well and ensure that all stakeholders are best informed on what Malaysia Madani is all about. It is also a vital need to make the people understand that Malaysia Madani is not entirely a recycling of the old concepts introduced by the previous prime ministers. It is a more comprehensive framework that tandem with the Islamic values based on the principles of sustainability, well-being, creativity, respect, confidence and ihsan.

The Malaysia Madani concept is critically important to be introduced and practiced among all groups of citizens in Malaysia. In other words, citizens across all backgrounds should have a clear understanding of the Malaysia Madani concept. This particularly concerns the young generation, also known as Generation Z who will be the successor of the country. Gen Z consists of individuals born between 1998 and 2009. This generation is also referred to as the iGeneration, the Net Generation, and the Internet Generation. Generation Z is the offspring of generations X (born between 1965 and 1980) and Y (born between 1981 and 1994). It is anticipated that Gen Z will carry on the legacy of national administration in the future (Mahani 2015).

This generation relies on knowledge and the rapid search for information via the internet (Szymkowiak et al. 2021). They require us to adopt to their behaviour (Andrea et al. 2016). They have a high level of confidence in their ability to use digital technology (Hinduan et al. 2020), hence their

lifestyle is highly influenced by digital technology devices and products (Hoque 2018). They generally express and communicate their thoughts, ideas, pleasure, and aspirations through instant messaging applications, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp (McCarthy 2020).

In the education sector, it is stated that the characteristics of Generation Z who mostly dominate the places at our higher learning institutions today have made it difficult for educational institutions to adapt their traditional teaching and learning philosophy to meet their needs (Mas Anom, Mohd Noor 2018).

Whereas in the political aspect, a recent survey reveals that the majority of Malaysian Generation Z (62%) reads political news a few times per week and answers queries about political facts accurately (above 68% correct). However, they rate themselves poorly in terms of political awareness, either due to a lack of confidence or the belief that there is a great deal about politics that they do not understand. The majority of Generation Z has little faith in the political actors who govern the country. They are dissatisfied with the functioning of the government, repulsed with political parties, and suspect that politicians will lie to win elections (Chai 2022).

The issue demonstrates the necessity of a study on the concept of government policy comprehension. It is a common situation for people to not be able to grasp a new concept introduced to them, what more it is a complex one that requires cognitive understanding from the people to fully understand hence collectively embrace the introduced concept. As Malaysia Madani concept is developed based on the Islamic values, this further constitutes a gap between community of different religions, races, and culture. This fact alone may become a factor which hinders all Malaysians especially the young, educated generation to embrace the core values of Malaysia Madani, which should not only be applied by the context of political administration, but also in individual citizen's life.

Taking this into account, the current study was conducted to gain insight into higher education community's understanding and acceptance of the Malaysia Madani concept. The study tried to answer the following research questions.

1. How do the higher education community view Malaysia Madani as a national policy?
2. To what extent do they understand the Malaysia Madani concept?

3. To what extent do the community trust the Government in successfully carrying out the Malaysia Madani concept?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islam has emphasized the evolution of man and woman. It must not distinguish between the physical and spiritual aspects of a person (Fauzi et al. 2014). Since the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh) fourteen centuries ago, Islam has promoted the development of a productive and devout servant of God. In order to create a generation that is well-rounded, it is necessary to adhere to a number of self-development guidelines.

It is essential for the young and educated generation to engage in a lifelong pursuit of education and knowledge. This procedure can assist them in making a prudent decision and making the best choice in life.

In addition to having a balanced spiritual well-being, a successful individual or citizen must also excel in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Islam places equal emphasis on all four components of education, with a particular focus on the spiritual, as it is the spiritual being that must govern the intellectual and cognitive components of the human being (al-Ghazali, 2003).

This will result in forming a community with an acute awareness of servitude. This is the primary purpose of a creation according to Allah. They must manage and develop the world or even the universe, but they must always keep in mind that they must do so as a servant of Allah, in accordance with His rules, laws, and regulations.

The young generation of the country for example must prepare themselves for global administration by ensuring the development of the necessary instruments, technologies, and sciences. Apart from that, they must develop themselves holistically in the inculcation of *al-iman* (faith) and *al-ilm* (knowledge) and be prepared to transmit the knowledge. Although not all knowledge can be related to the concept of tauhid, Islamic education must do its best to ensure that it functions as a tool to produce a person who fears God. They must ultimately seek happiness and prosperity in this world (*ad-dunia*) and the hereafter (*al-akhirah*). To be truly beneficial to a Muslim, knowledge and education must enable the individual to attain pleasure and success in this world and the hereafter (Othman 2001; Abdul Halim 1991).

The previously discussed elements are closely related to the policy advocated by the current government (Malaysia Madani), which is based on six fundamental Islamic values. It demonstrates that the values will make Malaysians more rounded individuals. In addition, Malaysia is nurtured with the significance of humanity.

The National Security Council specifies six fundamentals in the plan for Malaysia Madani for 2023 as follows.

SUSTAINABILITY

Malaysia's distinctive image is accentuated by the progress of the nation's quality of life in a balanced form between humans and nature.

PROSPERITY

Brings the meaning of balance or, more specifically, existence and all of its aspects that are encapsulated in balance.

INNOVATION

There are multiple connotations associated with creativity, including renewal, invention, and new design.

RESPECT

Includes connotations of human dignity.

TRUST

Devotion is closely associated with trust, which is a pledge of temporal and spiritual moral duty.

COMPASSION

Courtesy is synonymous with care and compassion.

Based on the six principles of Malaysia Madani, it proves that the element of balance is a focus of this policy. It is inevitable that humans comprise two main components such as body and soul. It is mentioned that humans are constructed with a variety of body shapes, similar to the diverse body shapes of animals. The organism has its own potential created by Allah as flawlessly as feasible in order to accommodate human requirements and for

their comfort to live and serve Him (Nurul Asiah & Noornajihan, 2023).

In psychology, the term psychospirituality combines the terms psychology and spirituality. Psycho or psyche generally refers to the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in the field of psychology. Islamic psychospirituality ultimately plays a crucial role in the evolution of insaniah (Abd Razak et al. 2023).

The components of sustainability, well-being, creativity, respect, confidence and ihsan (kindness and generosity to an individual or society) are the significant concepts which are in line with Islamic values. For example, Ibn Khaaldun, a well-known sociologist introduces his conception of civil society derives from a global conception of human society (almujtama al-insani), whereas he begins with a dynamic conception of human association (al-ijtima') (Tajuddin et al. 2014).

The existence of a dynamic society dates back to the earliest days of Islam. To illustrate this, the Prophet PBUH has no problem visiting the ailing Jews and Christians and giving them gifts (Mohammed Nidzam Abdul Kadir, 2009). This demonstrates that Islam disregards religious and racial distinctions when carrying out responsibilities associated with welfare and humanity (Embong et al. 2023). This parallels the concept of Malaysia Madani, which emphasises reverence among all members of society regardless of ethnicity.

In addition, the concept of patience will help society inculcate in them complete perseverance (Abu Dzar et al. 2023). It can have a positive impact on any decision-making process. This ethical practice will promote societal well-being as it can create a harmonious national environment.

This study applies the theory from Ibn Khaldun (1989) which relates to the concept of civilization.

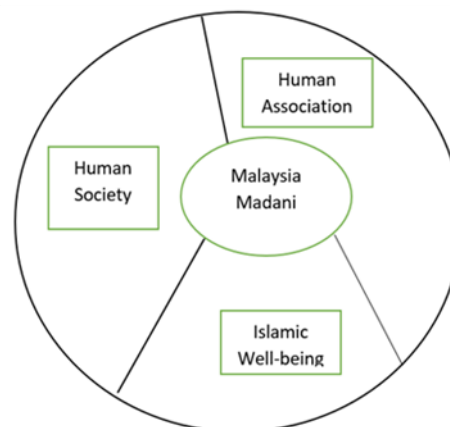


FIGURE 1. Ibn Khaldun's concept of civilization

Figure 1 depicts several interrelated components of the development of Madani policy in Malaysia. It incorporates *ihsan*, respect, creativity, sustainability, well-being, and confidence. These six pillars are to guide Malaysian society in practicing compassion in all daily actions. In addition, Ibn Khaldun's theory is well-established and suitable for the concept of unity and integration in Malaysia's plural society (Rosfazila et al. 2021).

Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify Malaysians' understanding of Malaysia Madani. It also attempts to examine the acceptance of the Malaysia Madani concept by higher education community in Malaysia, comprising of the educators and students. In addition, the study seeks to determine their level of confidence among the people in Malaysia regarding the capacity of recent leadership in Malaysia to implement the Malaysia Madani concept.

METHODS

The present study was conducted using a quantitative method. In specific, a set of questionnaire surveys was distributed to a total of N=451 participants who come from a public high learning institution in Malaysia, specifically Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). The participants were selected using a technique of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method used in qualitative research to select a sample of participants that is representative of a particular population. This method was chosen because it has the potential to improve the study's coherence, data precision, and conclusions (Thomas, 2022).

They are among the attendees of the "Temu Anwar" program held at Tunku Canselor Hall, UMK, on 18 June 2023. The ceremony partakers were chosen due to their ability to learn more about the government's agenda during the ceremony. The Prime Minister has disseminated several pieces of information about the agenda that are beneficial to university students and faculty.

There are five items in the questionnaire used in the study. The answers to this questionnaire are on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 means strongly disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means not sure, 4 standards agree, and

5 means strongly agree. The items firstly focus on the demographic background of the respondents, as well as their status as a student or staff; I see Civil Malaysia as a national policy - this item shows the respondents' confidence in Civil Malaysia policy; The next item is to measure the respondent's understanding of the pillars of Madani Malaysia, and the four main strategic pillars of Madani Malaysia; The last item is the youth's confidence in the positive changes produced by the Madani Malaysia policy.

The questionnaire was distributed immediately following the closing of the ceremony. Most of the respondents were university students, and it took them approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire survey, which was distributed online. The instrument was created using information from an official website pertaining to Malaysia Madani.

The data in the Google form was then automatically analyzed. Google Forms permits online data analysis and graphical presentation. Once the web questionnaire is completed online, the data will be promptly recorded in an analyzable format in a Google spreadsheet, allowing for tabulation and graphical representation of the data (Vasanth Raju & Harinarayana 2016).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents results and findings obtained through the data collection procedures undertaken in the study. Data analysis was performed to find answers to the following questions.

1. How do the higher education community view Malaysia Madani as a national policy?
2. To what extent do they understand the Malaysia Madani concept?
3. To what extent do they trust the Government in successfully carrying out the Malaysia Madani concept?

Demographic Information of the Participants

Table 1 provides a summary of the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. The participants of the research comprised both faculty members and students from Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK).

TABLE 1. Participants of the Study

Category	Number	Percentage
Students	345	76.5
Staffs	106	23.5
Total (Mean=1.765, SD=4.24)	451	100.0

As shown in Table 1, 76.5 percent (345 respondents) of the respondents were students, whereas 23.5 percent (106 respondents) were UMK staff. The study involved the UMK community, including faculty staff and students, whose population is distributed differently.

Participants' Understanding of the Strategic Core of Madani Malaysia

The results for the primary pillars of Madani Malaysia are presented in Table 2. Participants were requested to indicate the number of principal pillars of Malaysia Madani. This is to assess their comprehension of the Malaysia Madani implementation.

TABLE 2. Primary Pillars of Madani Malaysia

Category	Frequency	Percentage
6th primary pillar	304	67.4
4th primary pillar	63	14.0
5th primary pillar	42	9.3
7th primary pillar	21	4.7
8th primary pillar	11	2.4
9th primary pillar	10	2.2
Total (Mean=2.790, SD=0.976)	451	100.0

The result showed that a total of 304 respondents, or 67.4%, concurred that the pillar of Madani Malaysia comprises of six principal pillars. Meanwhile, 14% of them concurred that Malaysia Madani has only four primary pillars. Others concurred that Malaysia Madani possesses the following: (a) five primary pillars (9.3%); (b) seven primary pillars (4.7%); (c) eight primary pillars (2.4%); and (d) nine primary pillars (2.2%).

The result indicates that the participants' comprehension of the fundamental principles of Madani Malaysia is still low. They must acquire a deeper understanding of the primary milestones that have been achieved in order to aid the government's endeavours in the execution of Madani Malaysia. It is crucial for the participants to recognise that understanding the national agenda is fundamental in order to implement a harmonious way of life. This is

the case due to the Madani principle, which includes the guarantee of human welfare. It is crucial that Malaysians be educated on the significance of the human concept, given that humans consist of both a physical and spiritual form that warrants consideration. This is consistent with the findings of a prior investigation by Nurul Asiah and Noornajihan (2023), which suggests that every person ought to be aware of his position as a servant of God. Therefore, in order to effectively carry out his duties as Caliph, he must ensure that he satisfies the stipulation for attuned human welfare.

The data was further analysed to ascertain the participants' knowledge and understanding of the main pillars of Madani Malaysia, and the results are presented in Table 3. This segment evaluates the extent to which participants comprehend the execution of the Madani Malaysia pillars.

TABLE 3. Participants' Knowledge of the Main pillars of Malaysia Madani

		Frequency	Percentage
Assurance of Human Welfare Mean=0.820, SD=3.84	No	81	18.0
	Yes	370	82.0
	Total	451	100.0
Reform of Democratic Institutions and Legislation Mean=0.676, SD=0.468	No	145	32.2
	Yes	306	67.8
	Total	451	100.0
Creating Trustworthy Administration Mean=0.736, SD=0.441	No	119	26.4
	Yes	332	73.6
	Total	451	100.0
The Reorganisation of Society Mean=0.217, SD=0.413	No	353	78.3
	Yes	98	21.7
	Total	451	100.0
Narrowing the Racial Poverty Gap Irrespective of Religion and Language Mean=0.352, SD=0.478	No	292	64.7
	Yes	159	35.3
	Total	451	100.0
Construct and Integrate Malaysia into a Developed Nation by the Year 2030 Mean=1.765, SD=4.24	No	343	76.1
	Yes	108	23.9
	Total	451	100.0

The analysis revealed that the participants' understanding of the Malaysia Madani's pillars are as follow (Table 4).

TABLE 4. Percentage of the Participants who Understand the Pillar

Pillars	Participants who Understand the Pillar (%)
Ensuring the welfare of individuals	82
Reforming democratic and legal institutions	67.8
Establishing a reliable administration	73.6
Reorganising society	21.7
Reduction in racial poverty disparities irrespective of religion and language; and	95.3
Readiness for and integration of Malaysia into a developed nation by 2030	23.9

The respondents hold the belief that these six fundamental pillars provide support for the implementation of Madani Malaysia. It is evident from the findings that there is a need for a more concentrated understanding of societal redevelopment. This can be attributed to the respondents' limited understanding of the concept. The notion that society is inherently dynamic is, as Ibn Khaldun put it (Rosfazila et al. 2021). In light of this, it is crucial to inform the populace about the notion in order to organise a singular plural society in accordance with religious and societal requirements.

Furthermore, the results indicate that the component pertaining to Malaysia's preparedness for integration into a developed country by 2030 is

equally unexpected. This is due to the participants' limited understanding of the matter concerning preparedness for the progress of the nation. To expose, ignorance of the agenda is a prerequisite.

It is imperative that the younger generation understands how they must equip themselves for the nation's progress. Youth participation in national development initiatives that emphasise the acquisition of knowledge and skills can equip them to confront the forthcoming challenges. Government initiatives aimed at empowering the youth of today encompass various domains, such as social responsibility, education, religion, and morals, in addition to marketability, economics, and entrepreneurship (Unknown, 2022).

Malaysia Madani as a National Policy

The perspective of the respondents regarding the effectiveness of Malaysia Madani as a national

policy was determined using a sample t-test (Table 5).

TABLE 5. A sample t-test for Malaysia Madani as a National Policy

	M	SD	%	t**	df	P
Malaysia Madani is a national policy in my view	3.9823	0.869	79.6	24.003	450	.000

*Five-point scale: 1=Strongly disagree (1-20%), 2=Disagree (21-40%), 3=Neutral (41-60%), 4=Agree (61-80%), 5=Strongly agree (81-100%).**t-test value:3

Using a t-test value of 3, it can be determined that 79.6% of the respondents hold a positive view regarding Madani Malaysia as a national policy. This indicates that the implementation will significantly benefit the populace, particularly with regard to the economic, social, and political spheres.

The test results were re-confirmed with one positive and statistically significant t-sample (M=3.9823, SD=0.869, t (450) = 24.003, p=.000). This indicates that respondents support and endorse the Madani Malaysia implementation.

The results of t-test is presented in Table 6 indicating the extent to which the respondents are

confident that Malaysia Madani will bring positive and substantial changes in Malaysia. A nation's agenda is essential for attracting public attention to the efforts of the government. In addition to assessing the advancement of national policy, they advocate for the interests of Malaysian citizens. That is, they ought to educate and prepare themselves in order to be better equipped to confront global challenges. Furthermore, it is imperative that they foster a collaborative atmosphere amongst themselves to ensure that their products conform to both domestic and international standards.

TABLE 6. A t-test sample for belief in a Malaysia Malaysian context

	M	SD	%	t**	df	P
The degree to which I am certain Malaysia Madani will bring positive and substantial transformations in Malaysia	7.237	2.092	72.4	17.635	450	.000

*10 point scale: 1: Strongly disagree (1-10%), 2: Disagree (11-20%), 3: Somewhat disagree (21-30%), 4: Neither agree nor disagree (31-40%), 5: Somewhat agree (41-50%), 6: Agree (51-60%), 7: Strongly agree (61-70%), 8: Extremely agree (71-80%), 9: Exceptionally agree (81-90%); 10: Completely agree (91-100%).

**t-test value: 5.5.

According to the results of a sample t-test, most respondents (72.4%) expressed agreement that the Malaysia Madani initiative, which was unveiled by Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, will yield substantial and favourable transformations for the nation's progress and populace. In conclusion, this indicates that Malaysia Madani effectively established public confidence in the Prime Minister's guidance and in the execution of national policies grounded in the principles of Madani Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

The concept of Malaysia Madani is indeed a comprehensive guideline, which had been advocated by prominent thinkers, urging all Malaysians, including the leaders of the unity government,

to restore and uphold the dignity of the people on the basis of trust, decent values and morals, as well as effective governance. All Malaysians should understand and familiarize themselves with the policy, particularly the main pillars to ensure successful implementation of the policy by the government.

Since the humane concept can be practiced by parents and they are responsible for educating their children, all group of community in Malaysia should have an in-depth understanding and spirit towards applying Malaysia Madani concept in their life.

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