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## **Establish Regular Contact With Malaysian Diaspora, Envoys Told**

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysian foreign envoys must regularly engage and establish contact with Malaysian diaspora as part of their roles to strengthen the country's diplomatic deliverables, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said developing regular contacts with Malaysian diaspora could assist the envoys to carry out their responsibilities in a much more effective way in their host countries.

It also put them in a better position to disseminate information on Malaysia and its policies, he said when addressing the heads of mission at the 8th Heads of Mission Conference, at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations here, Tuesday.

He said as the front-line representatives of the government abroad, heads of mission also played a crucial role in forming and influencing public opinion about Malaysia, among Malaysians and foreigners alike.

"I would like to reiterate the crucial role you have in projecting a positive image of Malaysia abroad and to instil confidence in Malaysia's continued stability and sound governance among the international community," he said.

As such, Muhyiddin outlined three steps on how the diplomatic missions could mobilise Malaysian diaspora for the mutual benefit of Malaysia and their respective host countries.

"Firstly, get to know as many Malaysians as possible in your host countries. Heads of Mission must engage regularly with Malaysians in formal and informal ways as this will be useful in times of crises, particularly when natural disaster strikes or when social or political unrest takes place," he said.

Secondly, he said heads of mission need to engage Malaysian diaspora to help in promoting various aspects of Malaysia abroad as well as to help explain events or incidents that happened in Malaysia.

He said as the government's chiefs, they must continue to project positive image of the country at all times and communicate Malaysia's position on various issues effectively.

"By keeping an open channel of communication in engaging and mobilising Malaysian diaspora, you would be able to reach a wider group of people in your host countries," he added.

Thirdly, the Deputy Prime Minister also urged the diplomatic missions to work with the Talent

Corp in order to assist the government to attract more Malaysian experts to return home to work.

With the strength of one million Malaysians abroad and worldwide network of diplomatic missions in 105 countries, he was confident that Malaysia would be able to look at practical and realistic ways to tap into the talents of the Malaysian diaspora for the good of the nation.

"By tapping into the experiences and expertise of the Malaysian diaspora, we can reverse the brain-drain that has affected many countries where talents leave to look for better opportunities in more developed countries," he said.

Also present were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman and his deputy Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin.

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