

**Webinar: Forum Kemerdekaan: Perpaduan dalam Rangka Pemulihan
Negara daripada Pandemik COVID-19
(Independence Day Forum: Unity in the Framework
of National Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic)
(30 August 2021)**

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On 30 August 2021, IAIS Malaysia in collaboration with the Hadhari Global Foundation (HF), Nahdatul Ulama' Indonesia (NU), Malaysian Youth Council (MBM), Sunway Foundation for Planetary Health hosted an independence day forum entitled 'Unity in the Framework of National Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic.' The online forum featured renowned society leaders, academia, and activists including Datuk Dr Zainal Arifin Omar, the President of Public Health Society, Malaysia, Dr H. Helmy Faishal Zaini, General Secretary of Nahdatul Ulama Indonesia, Professor Madya Dr Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil, Deputy CEO of IAIS Malaysia, Mr Eddin Khoo, founder and director of PUSAKA, and Jufitri Joha, President of Majlis Belia Malaysia.

In his introductory remarks, Dato' Jefridin Haji Atan, Chairman of Hadhari Global Foundation, highlighted the significance of the forum in remembering our independence heroes who sacrificed for the benefit of the next generation. According to the first panellist, Zainal Arifin, Malaysia has already started a recovery phase of the epidemic, but community behaviour and support are critical for future restoration. H. Helmy, speaking in the context of Indonesia, emphasised the importance of a harmonious relationship between state and religion, as well as a sense of national fraternity, in dealing with public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Malaysian context, Mohamed Azam recalled historical narratives during Malaya's independence process, as well as the vital role of the country's constitution in unifying Malaysia's multiracial societies.

The fourth speaker, Eddin Khoo, who is a cultural activist and thinker, highlighted the complexity of Malaysian history and urged the new generation to fully comprehend the national pillars in the pursuit of developing the identity of 'Malaysian Nation'. Finally, as a youth leader, Jufitri Joha reminisced on the role of youths in the country's independence process and proposed that mentoring should be a national agenda where potential young talents are trained under the tutelage of senior society leaders.