Malaysia is on track towards becoming a top global tourist destination, with its strength lying in its multicultural diversity.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said people of different ethnicities lived harmoniously together in Malaysia, sharing a common bond of kinship and solidarity.

This, he said, ensured continuous peace and stability. "A century of living together in a closely knit society has contributed to the blending and forging of a unique culture which is diverse yet harmonious and vibrant which we are proud to share," Muhyiddin, who is on a three-day working visit here, said at the launch of Malaysia Cultural Week Paris 2015.

The event at the Place Du Palais Royale, which showcases a wide range of activities, exhibitions and cultural performances, offers visitors an insight into what Malaysia has to offer.

Muhyiddin is also spearheading Malaysia’s bid for a seat on the executive board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) for the 2015-2019 term.

Muhyiddin said Lonely Planet’s Best in Travel 2014 listed Malaysia as one of the world’s top 10 countries to visit while CNN Travel has ranked Kuala Lumpur as the world’s fourth best shopping city after New York, Tokyo and London.

"CNN has also listed three of our pristine island’s beaches, namely, Perhentian Kecil Island (Terengganu), Juara Beach (Tioman Island, Pahang) and Tanjung Rhu (Langkawi Island) as one of the top 50 among the World’s 100 Best Beaches."

"In addition, five sites in Malaysia have been listed as Unesco World Heritage Sites and these include Malacca city, George Town in Penang, the Mulu National Park in Sarawak, Kinabalu Park in Sabah and the Lenggong Valley in Perak."

Muhyiddin said Malaysia was fortunate that its people were multi-ethnic and multi-religious and its culture represented by the various races, including Malay, Chinese, Indian as well as indigenous groups in the peninsula and North Borneo.

"To this end, Malaysia Cultural Week Paris 2015 aims to bring people of different races and backgrounds together to celebrate the diverse cultural heritage of Malaysia."

Muhyiddin said visitors to the event will be treated to cultural performances comprising dances and music from the different ethnic groups as well as arts and craft exhibitions, and demonstrations.

Malaysian cuisine and delicacies will also be showcased. During his visit which will end tomorrow, Muhyiddin will also open the Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition at Unesco which is headquartered here.


Meanwhile, Malaysian ambassador to France Tan Sri Ismail Omar said 134,000 French tourists visited Malaysia last year, and this was expected to grow to 140,000 this year.