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Help SMIs to expand, urges trade group

SMALL and medium-sized industries should be encouraged to expand their operations as they play a supporting role in the nation's drive towards achieving industrialised status.

Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia secretary-general David Chua said SMIs which had potential should also be assisted "to forge networks and co-operate with others in specific fields".

"Irrespective of whether they are Bumiputera or non-Bumiputera businesses, SMIs should expand their activities to derive more economic progress for the country.

"In this respect, ACCIM and Malay Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia have formed a joint-venture committee for Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera businesses in 1995 to assist SMIs.

"This is our struggle to bring about a multiracial business community which can contribute towards national unity," he said.

In December last year, the council launched the first batch of about 40 joint ventures which had the participation of 80 companies and individuals.

The second batch of joint ventures will be launched in April.

"We surely have some definite programmes for these 'new breed of joint-venture companies', he said.

Chua was speaking at a Press conference to announce a Gongxi Raya gathering to be held at the Putra World Trade Centre on March 5.

The gathering is jointly organised for the second time by both the Malay and Chinese chambers of commerce and industry.

Also present were Malay Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia deputy president Dr Adam Harun and executive director Mustafa Najmuddin.

Chua said greater emphasis had to be placed on developing joint ventures between Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera businessmen as "it was moving at a slow pace".

"Although joint ventures between different communities had been forged previously, they were mostly between large corporations and those in the professional services sectors."

On the gathering, Dr Adam said both Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Ministers have been invited.

Members of both Malay and Chinese chambers of commerce will also be present.

Dr Adam said this was the second time both chambers of commerce were jointly organising the "open feast" in conjunction with the festivals.

He said the objective of the gathering was to "promote national integration, (and) treat our friends in the public and private sectors".

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