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Militant elements must be stopped

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AS a young Malaysian, the recent reports that there is in existence a group called the Kumpulan Militan Malaysia (KMM) and the fact that a Malaysian is suspected to be involved in terrorist activities in Indonesia concerns me.

It also concerns me that there is a possible link between the Malaysian and the KMM, and the possibility that the KMM was involved in the murder of Lunas Assemblyman Dr Joe Fernandez and the February 4 attack on the Guar Chempedak police station.

It concerns me because there are in existence elements in Malaysia who would like to see our beloved country go two steps backwards, when Malaysia's leaders, including our Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, are keen to see Malaysia moving forward, to become a developed nation by the year 2020.

An acquaintance once described Malaysia using the following analogy:- The country is like a long locomotive, with the engine being our Prime Minister, the Cabinet and all the forward-thinking intellectuals, academicians, corporate executives and civil servants.

At the other end of the locomotive are these segments of society who are so willing to see the 44 years of effort poured into building this nation by our nation's forefathers and present leaders come to naught.

As National Day approaches, it is timely for us to look back and realise that this country was not built on destiny.

This country was built by patriotic, hardworking people who wanted nothing else but to build Malaysia into a great nation.

The country's economic stability and social harmony has also been built on the blood, sweat and tears of our forefathers, and the experience of the 1969 riots.

In this day and age of globalisation and the Internet, we have to realise that the rules of the global economy have changed and for our country to compete for direct investments, we have got to preserve our peaceful and harmonious environment.

If our nation is in a state of disarray and chaos because of violence and ideological differences, we will not enjoy real development.

Let Malaysia's mix of races be our competitive advantage.

Undoubtedly, we have got to have a positive mental attitude in showing the world that Malaysia is one of a kind, Asia's only melting pot. In the long term, there is no other way for us to succeed in this globalised world but by remaining united.

In his book, 'The Lexus and the Olive Tree', Thomas L. Friedman opined that the world today, which is in the process of globalisation, is a world of contradiction and confusion.

On one hand, there are groups of people trying to produce high-quality goods, better cars, the better 'Lexus'. On the other hand, there are groups of people fighting amongst themselves over territory, and for ownership of the 'Olive Tree'.

Similarly, even within Malaysia, there are groups of people trying their very best to make the Malaysian economy stronger and more resilient, trying to make life better for us and for our children.

On the other hand, there are groups who are fighting for all the wrong things and for all the wrong reasons. I believe that it is only wise for Malaysians to "build the better Lexus", in the interest of our children

and children's children.

We need to be a `Bangsa Malaysia' who can learn to live with each other harmoniously and continue to develop our country and economy.

Let us not take what has been built for granted. I call upon peace-loving Malaysians who want better lives to reject groups and people who would like to see economic decline and lawlessness in our beloved country.

Malaysia, as a relatively small nation, cannot afford economic instability and racial disharmony, let alone violence, bloodshed and insurgency.

There is no benefit for all of us if this were to happen. To use Friedman's analogy, let us build `the better Lexus'.