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Dr Ling: Learn from other countries

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Malaysians must be willing to emulate the best practices of other countries in order for the nation to move ahead and be successful, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

He added they must not be reluctant to learn from others as it was the only way forward.

Dr Ling said the one that would survive in a rapidly developing world was not the cleverest or the strongest, but one who knew how to fully utilise his brain power.

"We may think that we are good but out there someone else in some other place will be better, and we must not be reluctant to learn from them.

"For instance, when we were looking into ways to upgrade our ports, I (as Transport Minister) visited all the renowned ports in the world, in Singapore, Rotterdam and others, to learn their best practices," he said after opening the two-day international conference on the "Review of Chinese Malaysian Society and Its Vision" at Wisma MCA.

Dr Ling said Malaysians must be humble enough to accept good ideas from other countries.

"Luxembourg, for instance, is a good example of a small country with good ideas which can be emulated.

"Although its population and size is about the same as our Larut and Matang districts, it has 180 international banks, 94 insurance companies and one of the best freighter airlines in the world. All these establishments operate from Luxembourg and they serve the whole of Europe.

"This is quite an achievement for a small country. As such, we can learn a lot from Luxembourg." (Dr Ling was part of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's entourage during the Prime Minister's working visit to Luxembourg recently.)

Earlier, Dr Ling said Malaysia was not given a chance to succeed after its Independence as the country comprised people from different races and religious backgrounds.

"But we have done well as there was give-and-take, solidarity and political co-operation between the races.

"Every month, leaders from other countries visit and ask how we did it. We share with them our philosophy, how we manage conflict and how we disagree only behind closed doors."

The conference, organised by the Persatuan Graduan Muda Malaysia together with the Xiao En Cultural Foundation and the Malaysian Ethical Politics Research Centre, was attended by some 200 participants including public university students. Also present was Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn.

Speakers were from Japan, Singapore, Australia, the United States and Hong Kong.

Persatuan Graduan Muda Malaysia chairman Quek Ngee Meng said Malaysian history should be studied in detail as the Chinese community could learn from the past. "This way, they can understand their full potential."

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