

Ong: All races must value unity

Country's strength is in diversity

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians of all races should value unity and co-exist in harmony, said MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting.

"After 50 years, let us talk about unity in diversity, where our cultures and beliefs can co-exist, and we can live together harmoniously," he said yesterday after attending the launch and premiere of Astro AEC's documentary *My Roots*.

The documentary, produced by Yellow Pictures and directed by Wong Kew-Lit, commemorates Malaysia's 50 years of independence.

Ong expressed hope that the nation's 50th year of independence would see Malaysians, irrespective of race, "coming together" to value unity.

"We must work harder to build a society and country which is strong, where everyone can benefit from the success of the country," he added.

He also said that it was important for good values to be preserved.

Later, Ong recorded a Merdeka address to be played on Astro radio stations in August.

In his address, he said Malaysians today enjoyed a harmonious life, with many achievements in the economic, social and political sectors.

He said the country's strength was its multi-racial society, adding that mutual understanding had helped develop the country.

Wong, when asked to talk about his documentary, said it had been a very challenging

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DATUK SERI ONG KA TING

task, with a lot of research undertaken.

"We had to figure out how to squeeze all that history into an hour's show and not make it boring," he said.

There are four segments to the 13-part series, which debuts tomorrow at 7.30pm. The first segment, *The Story of Us*, traces 600 years of Malaysian Chinese and their roots.

The second segment, *The Harmony Series*, is made up of five episodes and is on the interaction and cultural exchange between the Chinese, Malays, Indians and Siamese; the third segment *The Heritage Series* has four episodes on various festivals; and the last segment is *The Tradition Series*.

"It is so important that on our 50th anniversary, as Malaysians, we do something for the country that can be recorded for the future generation - and for the Chinese, Malays and Indians to walk hand in hand and grow together," said Wong.