

Leaders must get the ball rolling to realise ideals of Rukun Negara

NST- 17/7/2020 03.13

THE prime minister has launched the Rukun Negara golden jubilee celebration, organised by the Communications and Multimedia Ministry and the National Unity Ministry.

The objective is to realise the tenets and spirit of Rukun Negara, which was declared by the Yang Di-pertuan Agong on Aug 31, 1970.

The prime minister expressed hope that people would live up to the five principles of Rukun Negara, which are belief in god, loyalty to the king and country, supremacy of the Constitution, rule of law, and courtesy and morality

The first tenet, belief in god, is not merely a verbal assertion but should be a declaration of faith, a fervent belief in the goodness of the teachings of the religion that must be reflected in one's behavioural pattern.

But the actual situation does not reflect such zeal and, in fact, contravenes the tenets of the teachings. As many disregard these tenets. It would have achieved some measure of success had those who profess the realisation of these ideals practise what they preach.

The loyalty to the king and country tenet has a larger connotation than a verbal assertion of allegiance. The essence is the wellbeing of the people and country expressed through mutual respect and reciprocal deeds of goodwill and understanding.

The king is a symbol of majesty that provides solace and care for the people. And loyalty to the king and

country is not subservience to the powers that be, but a collaborative effort of patriotism.

Supremacy of the Constitution is the bastion of the nation for it regulates all matters of governance to safeguard the interests of the people and the institutions of check and balance. This is affected through the elected representatives, who take the oath to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution.

However, in a few instances, the actions of the elected representatives do not conform to the sacrosanct oath they swore upon.

The swearing of the oath is merely a formality to be installed in office. It is not a fervent declaration of an undertaking. Thus, political expediency and sectarian interests may jeopardise the sanctity of the Constitution.

The prime minister has stressed that no one is above the law for it is blind and indifferent to the imperatives of power and wealth. That has always been the mantra of the powers that be. Usually, the political landscape does weigh in on the scales of justice.

The judicial system does not exist in silo as it is a creature of the social and political imperatives of the day. Nevertheless, for the most part, it is guided by the law of the country and the oath taken by the judges.

To safeguard this rule of law, there must be an independent judiciary and the position of the attorney-



Pos Malaysia personnel with replicas of the special edition stamps launched in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Rukun Negara in Kuala Lumpur. BERNAMA PIC

general on whom rests the burden of prosecution or otherwise, as well as the legal adviser to the government, must be separated. And the attorney-general's decisions, when necessary, must be subject to the scrutiny of a bi-partisan committee.

Courtesy and morality, while it is imbued in the foregoing principles,

must be made an integral part of the people's behaviour pattern. As it stands, the people and the nation have yet to aspire this noble and lofty ideal of Rukun Negara.

To ensure these ideals permeate the lives of the people, those governing and ruling the country must set the example as role models beyond

those of the layman. No amount of celebration and rhetorical assertion would realise these ideals when those who preach do not practise them.

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