

Bold leadership needed

► Ku Li, Malaysia's longest-serving MP, minces no words as he speaks his mind

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PETALING JAYA: One of the biggest hurdles facing a country's development is poor leadership, says veteran politician Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

In an exclusive interview with *theSun*, Malaysia's longest-serving MP said while Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob is doing what he can, Malaysia needs a leader who is prepared to make bold decisions for the people and the country.

"You cannot have a prime minister who only worries about himself and his position. You need someone who takes all aspects into consideration, especially the needs of the people.

"You must be prepared to be thrown out if that is what it takes to implement bold decisions," he said.

"However, we can't entirely blame him (Ismail Sabri) for the lack of bold decision making, because his government is fragile and dependent on the support of various parties.

"It only takes two people to withdraw their support for him to fall," he pointed out.

Additionally, Tengku Razaleigh, familiarly known as Ku Li, said another issue Malaysia faces besides the Covid-19 pandemic is a political pandemic where we have had a line of "poor prime ministers".

"We have spent RM5 billion on vaccines and yet we have nothing much to show for it because our cases still remain high," he said

Ku Li added another issue is the problem of an almost hung Parliament.

"You cannot move forward without a strong majority," he added.

Moreover, he noted that when we transitioned from the Perikatan Nasional government to the Ismail Sabri government, the only difference about the Cabinet was the change of heads, while everything else remained the same.

"Such little difference wields a very tiny amount of change in our policy making," he noted.

Meanwhile, he added that politicians should also avoid exploiting the sentiments of race and religion to marshal votes for a particular party if we want to maintain a harmonious Malaysia.

"It has become so common where

we see sensitive words and phrases being thrown around that may hurt and anger certain people. This heightens the rift between races," he noted.

Ku Li believes the inclusion of younger candidates in Malaysian politics is a necessity.

"When I first ventured into politics, I was in my 20s, as were many others. Tun Abdul Razak became the deputy prime minister when he was only 28 years old. We were all young people," he said, adding we should emulate other nations in allowing the younger generation to be more active politically.

Another point made was that we should also be prepared to bring in more women representation in our decision and policy-making positions.

"We see many countries flourishing with women as leaders.

"Take note of New Zealand and the United States, where they have a woman prime minister and a woman vice-president respectively. Are they not doing well?"

