

# Let Keluarga Malaysia thrive

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THE concept of Keluarga Malaysia (Malaysian Family) was brought up by Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob in his maiden speech to the nation as Prime Minister.

To me, a Malaysian family in the context of nation-building means a nation of all Malaysians upholding family values and every member must be loved, respected and given opportunities to develop to their full potential.

In a family, we do not discriminate against any member. All are brothers and sisters, and all deserve fair treatment and opportunities. In a family, there should not be any favourites.

It is our hope that the government will do whatever it takes to ensure that these family values are internalised in all aspects of development planning.

Malaysian citizens irrespective of race, religion or creed are all part of Keluarga Malaysia. No citizen shall be branded *pendatang* (immigrant) or *orang asing* (foreigner).

Let's not just give lip service to Keluarga Malaysia. Let's practise it and experience it in our daily lives.

The Covid-19 pandemic has

shown that we are all in the same boat. Whatever our race, status in life or wherever we live, we are all in the same boat when we encounter stormy seas. All of us are vulnerable in the same way, and that means we all require the same level and measure of help.

We have demonstrated this amply, as NGOs, religious organisations, companies, and even individuals have responded quickly and fully to appeals for help from the poor and needy.

In recent years, fostering unity has been our greatest challenge. Previously, unity in diversity was touted as our greatest strength. Unfortunately, we seem to be drifting apart along racial and religious lines now.

This does not have to be so. God has blessed our country with so many resources and protected us from natural calamities.

We should therefore show our gratitude by our love for each other and for nature.

We must preserve our heritage and our values and leave them as our legacy for the future generations.

History must not judge us as being a generation of Malaysians who have enjoyed the best things that the nation has to offer, but have exploited them and left crumbs for the future generations.

Keluarga Malaysia must be an extension and expression of our own family unity and values.

As such, we have to break down racial barriers and form organisations and NGOs that are not based on race or religion. We have to do this if we are to move away from the current race and religious bias in so many aspects of our national life.

We understand that there was a historical need for race-based political parties in the past, but six decades after independence, it is time to opt for an inclusive mentality.

In any environment we find ourselves, we face similar challenges and issues, and so the cures prescribed must be the same for all.

Let's apply that family spirit in all aspects of our national life.

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