

We need ethnic bridge builders who can help foster harmony

IT is appropriate to commemorate past nation builders, one such example being Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman, a pillar of national unity.

He died on Aug 2, 1973, at 57. It was the year before I entered Parliament.

Many Malaysians this week paid glowing tributes to Tun Dr Ismail.

Apart from his honesty and integrity in politics, his firm stand against corruption and his steadfast support for good governance, he should also be remembered for his role in ensuring diversity towards nationhood and as one of the architects of the Rukun Negara.

This national policy for nation-building came into being after the May 1969 racial riots tragedy.

The Rukun Negara's principles should be upheld and practised for we must never take for granted the stability, peace and harmony we have attained.

Malaysians must always be conscious of the need to have mutual respect for one another. Malaysians must adopt and practise the principle of moderation, which is the key to nation-building.

The most urgent task of Malaysians is to ensure racial and religious harmony and to reject extremism. This is not the time for people to make incendiary statements that can lead to conflict and tension.

The IMalaysia Foundation says that what Malaysia needs today is not ethnic heroes, but ethnic bridge builders and peace ambassadors who can help foster goodwill, mutual respect, peace and harmony.

Multiracial living and embracing the diversity of our community are part of our history and heritage.

They have become a key source of racial integration and have played a part in making Malaysia a harmonious place to live, learn, work and play.

TAN SRI LEE LAM THYE
Trustee,
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Visitors at the mini exhibition on Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman at Dataran Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur, on Wednesday. PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD