

TN50 poll: Most Malaysians 'respect' each other's culture
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A national survey conducted by Kajidata Research on TN50 also reveals that 72.6% prefer living in neighbourhoods of mixed races.

PETALING JAYA: A telephone survey among 1,025 Malaysians has revealed that most respect each other's culture, would encourage their children to mix with those of other races and prefer living in neighbourhoods where there was a mix of different races.

Conducted by Kajidata Research from March 8-17 in support of the government's TN50 programme, its advisor, Professor Dr Syed Arabi Idid said although the country was going through an "identity phase", the "majority of Malaysians were opposed to the idea of a polarised country".

According to the survey, the majority understood the concept of "unity", giving as examples "communities that are cooperative" (37.4%), "multi-racial communities living in harmony" (32.0%), and showing tolerance to one another (29%).

96.9% indicated they respected the cultures of others while 80% agreed that Malaysia was a multi-faith country that guaranteed freedom of religion.

"Further questioning revealed that 82.5% agreed Islam was the official religion of Malaysia", with most (72.7%) suggesting they celebrated the festivities of those of other faiths while 17.7% said they did not.

72.6% also preferred living in neighbourhoods where there was a mix of races. "This was exemplified when 95.7% of the respondents surveyed indicated that they encourage their children and/or family members to befriend people of different ethnicity," a statement regarding the survey results said.

The survey also found that most Malaysians took patriotism seriously with 93.5% indicating they were willing to fight for the country.

"This is a good indication that Malaysians want to reconcile and progress as a united people and country," the statement said.

On the education front, 82.4% supported efforts to offer scholarships regardless of race and religion and 75.1% supported the different types of schools although 41.4% said they supported the streamlining of different types of schools and 47.4% were opposed to the idea.

80.9% also agreed the usage of Bahasa Melayu would achieve the aim of fostering unity in the country.

The survey was conducted to gauge what unity and prosperity really meant to the average Malaysian.

Respondents comprised 58.0% Malays, 23.2% Chinese, 7.5% Indians, 6.0% Bumiputra Sabah, 4.2% Bumiputra Sarawak, 0.1% Orang Asli and 1.0% of other ethnicities and were selected on the basis of random stratified sampling along ethnicity, gender, age and state according to national demographics.

The survey was conducted via Computer Aided Telephone Interview (CATI). The complete cross-tabulation report can be obtained by contacting Kajidata Research.

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