

Gerakan's case for Rukunegara, Bangsa Malaysia

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KUALA LUMPUR: If the Rukunegara will help improve unity, understanding and harmony among the country's multiracial people, Malaysians should all practise it, says Gerakan.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said all Malaysians should appreciate and practise this national code of ethics.

Towards this end, he said the party supports the Prime Minister's call for everyone to pursue the objectives of Vision 2020,

which promotes the Rukunegara and the concept of Bangsa Malaysia.

"It doesn't mean that we will be less Malay or Chinese or Indian or Kadazan or Iban (by calling ourselves Bangsa Malaysia).

"You can be a Malaysian yet retain a racial identity in a multi-racial country," he said at a press conference here yesterday.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had said on Friday that political parties have to practise

restraint when raising issues that could cause unhappiness among the country's multi-racial population.

The Prime Minister also reminded Malaysians that the Rukunegara was created so that everyone would know when to control their words and deeds, adding that its tenets should not be put aside.

Gerakan reckoned that Malaysians should find ways to create a better understanding.

Dr Lim added that ever since

the term "Bangsa Malaysia" was mentioned in 1991, there had been only a few debates on the topic and hardly any discussion to define the concept.

He also urged the Government and the people to work together to improve the country's economy in view of the emergence of China, India and Vietnam as global players.

Asked if he thought the country's economy had deteriorated under Abdullah's leadership, the Energy, Water and Communi-

cations Minister retorted: "Don't blame Pak Lah. I'm just talking about the current situation."

"In the past, when we opened the door, everyone came in (to invest in the country). Now, people will not come if we do not invite them and do not give them incentives.

"We have to find new ways to attract more foreign direct investment while maintaining domestic investment. One way is to seek new economic niches," he said.