



Pinang points Imran Hilmy
imran@thestar.com.my

Let's build unity despite differences

Malay boy inspired by happy childhood days in multiracial community

THE following is a real story of a Malay boy who lived in a predominantly Chinese community for more than 30 years in Tanjung Bungah, Penang.

Raised in a family with good moderate Islamic values, this true-blue Malaysian is the son of a school teacher and grandson of a pre-independence fighter.

He remembers that every Chinese New Year, and Thnee Kong Seh (Jade Emperor's birthday) in particular, the night would be turned into a few hours of daylight when non-stop rockets and fireworks lighted the sky.

It was loud and noisy but no complaints because the boy together with his siblings would be among those having fun with kak Kim, *abang* Ah Chai and a few others.

His mum would never stop them from joining the merrymaking. Her only constant reminder was to never go near the firecrackers when they are being lit for fear they would get hurt.

Like other children living along the stretch, the boy would also receive *angpow* from Auntie Chu and others.

Sampling his favourite *kuih bakul* (three *kuih*) and pineapple tarts brought him the most joy.

What fascinated him the most was the Chinese wedding where the groom and his entourage would come in big cars and honk incessantly when they arrive at the bride's house.

Then there was Dr Rama who never failed to treat his neighbours with *thosai* and a few other dishes during Deepavali.

Likewise, the boy's family would reciprocate during the Hari Raya celebration.

His mum's speciality – tomato rice – was a must-have during this period.

And the harmonious relationship did not take place only during the festive season. Day in day out, the community was practising the 1Malaysia concept.

Alas, all good things must come to an end.

Five years ago, this boy, who is yours truly and all grown-up now, moved out from the neighbourhood.



Imran (left) and his siblings spending Chinese New Year at the home of neighbour Auntie Chu (standing, left) in the 80s.



A teenaged Imran (bow tie, in front) posing with his multi-ethnic co-workers and supervisor.

I can make heads turn with my Hokkien as I used to work for a Chinese businessman after my school days.

All this was done without abandoning the basic tenet of being a Muslim. I guess the way I was raised by

my parents helped me to realise the importance of co-existing with others. I strongly believe that every

Malaysian, regardless of ethnicity and religion, must put aside their differences and find a common ground to live together peacefully.

We can be different in our skin colour, religion or political belief. But that's what makes us unique as Malaysians.

Let us remember the sacrifices made by our forefathers who had toiled to build the nation with their sweat and blood.

As the Father of Malaysia, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman put it, we must each always think first of Malaysia and the national need and last of ourselves.

He said the people must be one-minded and loyal with one aim – to make Malaysia, the land we love, a happy abode for all of us.

If we all do this, then we can guarantee liberty, security, prosperity and happiness for the future.

Come next Wednesday, we as a nation will have another special occasion to be proud of. Happy Malaysia Day!

PBAPP: High-rise management must maintain rooftop tanks

HIGH-RISE building management bodies must maintain internal reticulation systems to ensure that the quality of the treated water delivered to units is not compromised, said Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa.

The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer advised individual water consumers staying in high-rise buildings to ask their building management about the upkeep of their building's internal reticulation system including rooftop water tanks.

"This is important if the building

is old or if a consumer notices something amiss with the quality of the treated water that reaches the taps in his or her unit," he said in a statement.

"If the rooftop tanks of a high-rise building have not been inspected for a few years by a licensed plumber, consumers have the right to insist that the management take action immediately.

"The cost of inspection and cleaning a rooftop water tank may seem high but personal health risks must be considered.

"Moreover, the cost may be shared with other water

consumers living in the building.

"It may be better to pay for cleaning a rooftop water tank than to install an individual water filter because not all water filters may provide proper protection against bacterial and virus-related risks.

"Good individual water filters may be expensive to install and the filter elements must be cleaned and replaced regularly.

"On its part, PBAPP strives to supply the best quality treated water possible at reasonable costs."

Jaseni added that in 2019, a total of 3,150 samples of treated water produced by PBAPP were taken

from various treatment plant outlets and pipelines throughout Penang by the state Health Department and PBAPP.

"The laboratory test results indicated that the quality of the treated water is amongst the best in Malaysia, in accordance with the Quality Assurance Programme set by the Health Ministry," he said.

Jaseni was responding to *The Star's* recent report on the deplorable state of rooftop tanks in some apartment blocks in Penang.

Meanwhile, Jaseni said PBAPP was responsible for the quality of

the treated water until the point of the bulk meter position outside every high-rise building.

"Pumping systems, pipelines and rooftop water tanks located within private premises after the PBAPP bulk meter position are regarded as components of internal reticulation systems.

"The management bodies of high-rise buildings are responsible for the maintenance of internal reticulation systems which include rooftop tanks.

"This responsibility is clearly defined in the Water Services Industry Act 2006."