

BERNAMAPIX

**PATRIOTIC**

... Senior citizen Mustafa Ramli, 62, standing next to his van, which is painted with the Jalur Gemilang, at Dataran Star Walk in Alor Star yesterday. Ramli, also known as "Ramli Merdeka", painted the flag on his van to celebrate the upcoming National Day.



**Johor prince raps Puad over 'no problem' remark**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Johor crown prince Tunku Ismail Tunku Ibrahim yesterday ticked off an Umno supreme council member over a statement he made regarding the relationship between the Johor ruler, Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar, and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak.

"With regard to a statement made by Umno supreme council member Datuk Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi that there's no problem between the Johor ruler and the prime minister, it is my opinion that one should not make statements without being aware of the present situation," he said on the Johor Southern Tigers Facebook page last night.

Mohd Puad had on Saturday said in Batu Pahat that certain quarters had spread rumours on social media that the sultan and Najib were not on good terms.

This followed viral photographs of Najib and his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor walking past the Sultan and Tunku Ismail while attending Singapore's National Day event in the republic on Aug 9.

"I met Najib recently and he told me there is no misunderstanding between him and the Sultan.

"Najib had in fact greeted His Majesty before the start of the National Day parade in Padang," Mohd Puad told reporters after opening the Batu Pahat Umno division meeting at Dewan Jubli Intan.

"Do not make any speculation whether there's a problem or not between His Majesty and the prime minister, as only H.M. The Sultan and I know the whole story of the said matter, and as such, for the time being, only we need to know and there's no reason for it to be made public," added Tunku Ismail.

**Thumbs-up for Pemudah**

> Its efforts to facilitate ease of doing business have been well recognised: PM

BY **BERNARD CHEAH**  
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**PUTRAJAYA:** The Special Task Force to Facilitate Business (Pemudah) received a pat on the back from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak for its sterling services in expediting the public-private sector initiatives in tandem with the Economic and Government Transformation Programmes.

He said Pemudah's work may not be noticeable at times but it is appreciated by both the government and corporate sectors.

"The ideas it introduced are integral to the government's policies and processes to maintain Malaysia's economic trajectory," he said when launching the Pemudah Annual Report 2014 yesterday.

Pemudah, which was set up on Feb 7, 2007, is co-chaired by Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa and Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers president Datuk Seri Saw Choo Boon.

Najib said Pemudah's efforts to facilitate the ease of doing business in Malaysia have been recognised by international bodies such as the World Bank, the World Economic Forum and the Institute of Management Development (IMD).

"Despite some naysayers who wish to talk Malaysia down, this is the real story of our economy - years of record investment, sound fundamentals, diversification, reform, sustainability and inclusivity.

"These credible and influential reports highlight Malaysia's attraction as a preferred investment destination and are testament to the private-public partnership epitomised by Pemudah, which forms the foundation of Malaysia's economic growth," he said.

Najib said there is no room for complacency if the government is to deliver

its promise of a peaceful, prosperous and progressive Malaysia.

"The resilience of our people and institutions, the determination of our government and the blessings we have been showered with have been crucial in bringing us to where we are today," he said.

Najib noted that the government is beginning its last lap in its journey to become a high-income status nation by 2020.

"The challenge grows ever larger in a globalised and hyper-connected world.

"No country can insulate (sic) itself if it is to progress and prosper," he said.

He said the volatile prices of commodities, crisis within the euro zone, shifting balance of power, spread of terrorism and climate change are among some of the threats faced by Malaysia today.

"But I am confident that we Malaysians are up to this challenge. Our track record demonstrates that we can, and will, overcome whatever hurdles placed in our path," he said.

**Gerakan Youth: Avoid race-based statements**

BY **AMAR SHAH MOHSEN**  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Gerakan Youth has urged leaders to avoid making race-based statements, which could ignite hatred and outrage among the public.

Its secretary-general William Chang Yoong Hsi said all Malaysians should also put aside any racial issue as they prepare for the National Day celebration.

"If we keep making statements which are race-based, it will only anger the public, which is not good for the country.

"We should leave racial issues behind us and move forward, especially now that our economy is a bit uncertain," he said during a media briefing on the three-day "Love Malaysia Car Convoy" from Kuala Lumpur to Kuantan beginning on Aug 29, at the Gerakan headquarters, here yesterday.

In moving forward, Chang said, politics should be put aside and leaders should think out of the box on how to make the country's economy grow.

"What can they (leaders) come up with to give the rakyat a better life? How are we going to transform the country? When everyone is united, the country's economy will definitely improve," he said.

Meanwhile, Gerakan public complaints bureau chief Wilson Lau Hoi Keong said the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) should act sterner in clamping down on those who stoke racial fire through social media.

"MCMC should block, catch and take legal action against those who make statements which can create racial tension.

"If not, the situation will get worse and the rakyat and our economy will suffer," he said.

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SHAHRIIL BASRI/THE SUN

**BON VOYAGE** ... Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak (centre) bids farewell to the pilgrims at Dewan Melawati, Kompleks Tabung Haji Kelana Jaya. Some 270 pilgrims left for Mecca yesterday to perform the haj. Also in the picture is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom (left).