

COMMENT

A different kind of patriot

SILENT HEROES: The contributions of a select few are undeniable

NOT long ago, there was a unique experience of quiet patriotism at the Chinese Assembly Hall when Emeritus Professor Khoo Kay Kim and Datuk Wee Ka Siong were engaged in a debate on the subject of Chinese schools.

Those present were mainly Chinese, who debated in Bahasa Melayu, albeit at different levels of proficiency with no coercion from anybody. Tan Yew Sing and his team organised the debate.

Tan had also established INTI College, which later became INTI In-

ternational University. Among other groups, the university trained hundreds of Mara and Public Service Department (PSD) students in the American Degree Programme.

Thousands of foreign students received their education at INTI. He is one of the leading pioneer edupreneurs of private education who implemented "twinning" degree programmes with foreign universities.

When INTI was sold to the Laureate Group, American edupreneurship and a global quality brand was brought to the Malaysian education hub. Former United States president Bill Clinton is the chancellor of the Laureate Group while Tan Sri Arshad Ayub is the chancellor for INTI International University Malaysia.

In quiet unobtrusive ways, Tan nurtured business relationships between Malaysia and China. He was one of the few privileged foreigners

to be invited to attend the Chinese Parliament and also forged ties between education and business leaders.

Professor Datuk Teo Kok Seong has done the nation proud to elevate Bahasa Melayu as a language of national unity and an intellectual language, in the tradition of the illustrious struggle of Malay language nationalism. Tirelessly and in different domains, he espouses the power and glamour of the language and its capacity to be the medium of instruction and discourse at all levels, and in all knowledge fields.

Teo, who was an English teacher,



Datuk Dr Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid is deputy vice-chancellor of INTI Laureate International University



Tan Yew Sing is one of the leading pioneer edupreneurs of private education who implemented twinning degree programmes



Professor Datuk Teo Kok Seong espouses the power and glamour of Bahasa Melayu as the medium of instruction and discourse

has become the *mahaguru* of Malay Sociolinguistics and Bahasa Melayu, committed to ignite love for the Malay language among Chinese, Indians and others.

Beyond language, he champions the institutions of nationhood, such as loyalty to the monarch as stated in *Rukun Negara*, and the Malaysian identity. He takes on detractors from all corners with sincere boldness and exemplary, undeterred commitment.

Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, who left politics in 1990, became a social activist par excellence who champions all kinds of issues for Malaysians regardless of colour, creed or political affiliation.

He is chairman of the National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health, vice-chairman of the

Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation and member of the KL City Hall Advisory Board.

He has served as a member of the Special Royal Commission to enhance the operations and management of the Royal Malaysian Police, trustee of Yayasan 1 Malaysia, Member of Suhakam, Mapen and the National Service Training Council.

He has a list of awards, evidence of exemplary and significant contributions. Among the causes he champions are crime prevention, mental health, national unity, kidney care and organ donation, workers' rights and social welfare.

His book entitled *As I Was Saying: Viewpoints, Thoughts and Aspirations of Lee Lam Thye* encapsulates his persona and life purpose.

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Leaders with concern for nation's unity, harmony and development

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Islam had been in China longer than in Malaysia. There are more Chinese Muslims in China than Malay Muslims in Malaysia.

Within that context, Dr Ridzuan Tee has been accepted as one of the iconic *dakwah* figures in Malaysia.

With unabated passion, he spreads the word in every corner of the land through appearance in top media and Islamic academic programmes. He boldly engages politicians, scholars and fellow *ulama* in matters of religion and national identity.

He teaches in the National Defence University and is increasingly able to influence the politics of Islam, beliefs, faith and values of generations of leaders of the future.

Though sometimes controversial, protested by irked Chinese and Indian leaders, Rizduan's contributions are impactful.

Khoo is known for lecturing without Powerpoint slides or textbook notes because he lives with an encyclopedic mind of facts and concepts, regarding all aspects of Malaysian history.

From the names of Chinese, Indian, Eurasian or Malay persons, he

would be able to make connections and trace the path of migrations and the ancestry with delightful intimate details of various villages, clans and families.

He is a member in scores of national committees and non-governmental organisations for nation-building.

Thousands of Malaysians, including younger historians, were his former students.

They developed a grasp of significant Malaysian history from his lectures, articles and books. To date there is no other historian as prolific as him.

When the world paid their last respects to Nelson Mandela, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was among the dignitaries in attendance.

Tan Sri Lim Kok Wing, who contributed to the Mandela election campaign, was also present. His global and national contributions include leadership in facilitating composition of scores of patriotic songs heard and hummed by Malaysians from all generations in formal and social functions.

Thousands of Felda students, Malaysians and foreigners had out-of-the-box exposure in unique educational experiences when they

studied at Limkokwing University and mastered creative and innovative skills in and out of classrooms.

He has been adviser in many top-level committees and in closed-door interactions with the top leaders of the country, particularly in regards to creativity, innovation, design and national development. He has branded Malaysia as an innovation nation globally.

The lifetime substantive contributions of the select few in focused fields are undeniable. In common is their concern for national unity, harmony and national development.

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