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# Respect Merdeka Day, urges Rais

> Minister says controversial theme and song to be maintained

BY CINDI LOO  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Rais Yatim has urged detractors of the government's chosen theme and song for Merdeka Day to respect the day, even if they continue their criticisms.

"The Opposition can criticise and make fun of this year's theme, including the logo and the theme

song," he said.

"I take in their criticisms, but I must ask them to not deviate from respecting our Independence Day," he said at a press conference at the ministry's office yesterday.

He said the Opposition is welcome to rename the theme to "Sebangsa, Senegara, Sejiwa" (One nationality, one country, one soul), as they had suggested earlier yesterday, when they became the government of the day.

"The government has already decided to continue using the theme 'Janji Ditepati' (Promises Fulfilled) for the 55th Merdeka celebrations despite the criticisms, because since 1957 we have fulfilled almost 95% of what we have committed to achieve for the people.

"In the end, the government of the day decides the theme. We will let them (Opposition) decide if they become the government of the day," he said.

He was commenting on virulent comments against the theme, which many felt was partisan towards Barisan Nasional

ahead of the 13th general election, and the song which Rais penned.

Rais also announced that the logo for this year's Independence Day will revert back to the iMalaysia logo after harsh criticisms from the public, and the slogan "Janji Ditepati" will be inserted at the bottom.

"We have been using the iMalaysia logo since 2009, so it will be the main logo.

"Besides that, we will also screen eight pieces of art submitted by graphic design associations and university students to various media channels, from this week until Sept 16," he said.

On another matter, Rais said the broadband penetration rate in Malaysia has achieved 64%, and is on route to steering Malaysia into a digital age soon.

"Malaysia is one of the most advanced countries in terms of digital initiatives and broadband usage, with 37 million mobile phones and 13.5 million Facebook and Twitter users," he said.

## Innovation ambassadors for Malaysia

BY HEMANANTHANI SIVANANDAM  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PUTRAJAYA:** The government is looking to produce 5,000 "innovation ambassadors" over the next five years to play an active role in improving the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak yesterday announced a new entity named Genovasi or "The Innovation Generation" to provide young professionals and graduates with the opportunity to become the ambassadors.

To be spearheaded by the Special Innovation Unit (Unik) under the Prime Minister's Office and sponsored by the Malaysian Innovation Agency (AIM), Genovasi will be launched early next year.

It is expected to be granted university status within five years with a board guiding it, he said.

Three tracks have been identified for youths to apply new innovation skills. They are Community-Centric Projects to benefit the People; Economic-focused Projects to generate new-wave wealth and; Government Enhancement Projects to help improve delivery service.

"We are the custodians of



Najib with representatives of international partners after announcing Genovasi Malaysia yesterday. They are (from left) Datuk Jimmy Choo, Joseph Lentsch, Dr Timm Krohn, Dugie Cameron, Dr Jerome Glenn and Salim Ismail.

Malaysia, the future belongs to the youths. It is this government's responsibility to leave a strong and sustainable foundation for the youths to build upon," he said.

"We understand and appreciate that youths are no longer contented with being passive spectators, they want to actively engage in improving the country that they are going to inherit, so the current and future generation of leaders will work hand-in-hand for collective good," Najib said in announcing Genovasi Malaysia at

his office.

Unik chief executive officer Datuk Kamaljit Singh later told reporters that Unik and AIM help youths equip with skills needed to solve "real world" problems and focus on specific projects.

"For an example, say a group of youths come in and learn innovation skills and methodology to provide clean water in rural areas.

"AIM will look at appointing them (innovation ambassadors) to the right body or ministry to

implement these projects.

"They (innovation ambassadors) will be implementing projects but under the guidance of Genovasi, so coaches and mentors will come from the organisation," said Kamaljit.

He said youths will be invited to apply and become participants early next year. "We will be flashing the details over the next few months. It will be like an internship ... We will work out the details, maybe some could get allowances," he explained.

## Media personnel must identify themselves clearly: Cop

BY ALYAA ALHADJRI  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Police on duty during Bersih 3.0 had "difficulties" differentiating media personnel from rally participants due to lack of clear identification, the National Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) inquiry into the rally heard yesterday.

This is despite every journalist, photographer or videographer having on their person a government accredited media tag or their company's identification card.

ACP Jamaluddin Abdul Rahman, who was holding a watching brief, suggested that every media person on duty in such a situation dons a vest or arm-band with the name of his or her respective organisation.

He also proposed that media bodies hold a "briefing session" with the police, informing the authorities of those who would be assigned to cover such events.

Jamaluddin made the suggestion to *The Star* photographer P. Pusanathan, who told the panel that he was prevented by five policemen, one in uniform and the rest plain-clothed, from taking shots of police beating up protesters.

Pusanathan said the incident occurred at

about 6.30pm when a group of policemen from Dataran Merdeka started shouting "tolong bersurai" (please disperse) before chasing defiant participants. "All those who were caught were beaten and arrested," Pusanathan told the three-member panel headed by Suhakam vice-chairman Dr Khaw Lake Tee.

Pusanathan said he was standing near the Masjid Jamek LRT station, taking photographs of the incident, when he was spotted by a uniformed police officer. "The policeman came up to me and said: 'Tak boleh ambil gambar! Bagi camera!' (Stop taking photographs! Surrender your camera!)"

Pusanathan said he was then surrounded by four plainclothes policemen, one of whom grabbed the strap of his camera and demanded that it be handed over.

"I told him that I can't give it up. Then another one asked for the memory card. I also told him 'no' because it contained all my work," said Pusanathan, adding he finally consented to delete all pictures from the memory card.

Pusanathan also agreed with lawyer Andrew Khoo, who represented election watchdog Bersih 3.0, that he at that point felt more threatened by the police than the protesters.

## 'Act fails to protect whistleblowers'

► FROM FRONT PAGE

raid at Rafizi's house, saying it was unprofessional and a political ploy.

"The police and Bank Negara officers' action was unnecessary as they could have called Rafizi and Johari, and asked them to cooperate. There was no need for a dawn raid," he said.

Human rights group Lawyers for Liberty claimed the case highlighted the weakness of the Whistleblower Act 2010 which lacks protective safeguards.

It said the Act had failed in its objective to protect whistleblowers as the authorities continue to criminalise the act of whistle-blowing, particularly in government-linked corruption cases.

"We also condemn the high-handedness inflicted on Rafizi and Johari who were arrested early in the morning and unnecessarily handcuffed despite full cooperation given to the police.

LFL's campaign coordinator Fadhiah Nadwa Fikri pointed to the stark contrast in which VIP treatment had been given to Mohd Salleh when he was charged with criminal breach of trust and violation of company law.