

Essay on Is Racial Integration Possible in Malaysia' Give Your Views

A race is a group of people who have their own set of beliefs, religion, culture, and other peculiar characteristics. Invariably the members of a race are very proud of their race and would defend what they believe in or their way of life if they are threatened in any way.

So, when two or more races stay together in the same place, conflicts are bound to occur. At best they just let each other live side-by-side as long as they do not interfere with each other's way of having.

We in Malaysia are in this position. There are three major races here, the Malays, the Chinese, and the Indians with a smattering of other ethnic groups. So far, we have managed very well to stay as one nation despite our differences. Only the May 13 incident in 1969 spoiled an otherwise perfect co-existence between the races.

The people of Malaysia have come a long way since the ugly incident. Most have learned that racial strife is intolerable and not worth the bloodshed. So, we have learned to tolerate each other a great deal more. More than that we have learned to help the country prosper despite all the difficulties. While other countries are rocked by racial riots. we live in harmony.

However, this living in harmony does not mean that there is racial integration. Racial integration is the combination of all the races to make one unique Malaysian race. I cannot envisage this becoming reality, not at least in my lifetime.

The basic difficulty lies in this: which race is going to give up its

culture or beliefs so that it suits the other races? From what I see, no race is going to do that voluntarily. Culture and religion are too deeply ingrained in us from the moment we are born. It is impossible to change one's beliefs and upbringing without causing havoc to one's own race.

In the few mixed marriages that we see sometimes, one party has to virtually forsake all of his or her culture and beliefs in order to be accepted by the other party. So instead of integration of two races or at least the assimilation of each other's cultural values, it is a complete dropping of one's culture and beliefs to embrace completely the others. So, the races remain adamant about their positions and are unlikely to concede anything for racial integration.

So, we are likely to continue to live in racial harmony, not integration. We have had many years of practice in harmony so I see no reason why we cannot go on as usual. The only danger lies in religious fanaticism which so far, the government has the wisdom to put down before it gets out of hand. Besides that Malaysia does not have any great insurmountable problems between the races. So while we may not integrate completely, we have the next best thing harmony. For that, we should be thankful.