

Engineered for success

Gamuda brings out the best by practising moderation.

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KUALA LUMPUR: United we stand, divided we fall.

Such is life at a construction site, where people from various backgrounds have to share common facilities and adapt to one another to work together well.

"As a contractor, when you get the job, you have only one goal: deliver the job. Our duty is clear. Everyone is focused and everyone tries to contribute," said Gamuda Engineering managing director Datuk Ubull Din Om.

After spending 29 years at the company, the 53-year-old from Baling, Kedah, has a wealth of similar stories to tell from his days as a site supervisor.

Whether they're working in the jungle or the highlands, workers need a "one leg kick" attitude to keep things going, which is taken from the Cantonese phrase *yat kiok thek* to mean a job or situation where one has to do anything and everything.

Happily, this shared responsibility to fix problems together can foster greater unity.

"Whether you like it or not, you have to share the same space. If the campsite has no water, we take charge to fix the burst pipe. At campsites, there is only one canteen where people congregate. And it has to serve food for all races.

"We are all very united because we are all together in the same place. There is no such thing as 'this is your area, and this is my area'. There is only one meeting area. Only one place to bathe. Whether you're from Kuala Lumpur or Kelantan, you have to stay in the same quarters," said Ubull.

And when the electricity is turned off, workers would gather to chat and play cards by candlelight.

But sometimes, a hard day's night never ends.

"Contractors work hard. You can't simply stop, you have to keep going. For instance, tunnelling is a 24-hour thing. If you stop the tunnel boring machine (TBM), the pressure will drop and it will cause a collapse. It involves many people; workers, operators, engineers and supervisors working together," he added.

The same can be said for the pursuit of moderation, which is a continuous process of working together to achieve racial harmony and unity in multi-cultural Malaysia.

To Ubull, the first step that Malaysians can take to boost the



Company policy: According to Ubull, Gamuda defines moderation as finding a balance between extremes and accepting others for what they are with a tolerance and understanding of each other's differences.

spirit of moderation is to accept people as they are.

"You cannot change people too much. You must know their culture, and understand that they are from different backgrounds," said Ubull.

After all, the best change comes from within.

In the last five years, Gamuda has infused a conscious sense of moderation in its workforce.

"In Gamuda, we define moderation as finding a balance between extremes and accepting others for what they are with a tolerance and understanding of each other's differences.

"We embrace diversity and inclusiveness, and in doing so, promote harmony and unity and advocate equal opportunities for all our people," said Ubull.

Gamuda looked beyond business growth to embark on programmes such as *Women at Work*, *Diversity and Inclusiveness* and *Talent Development*.

"These programmes that were seeded some years ago are really seeing results now, and we are already 'living moderation' in the way we work and run our business," said Ubull.

Be it gender, race or physical and mental diversity, he believes that a constant practice in moderation will transform our worldview and the way we do things.

"With this, we have values that would contribute not only to organisational growth but to individual progress and development too.

"Developing our people by embracing their shortcomings,

weaknesses and strengths is our ultimate goal," he added.

Talent development and training is a major initiative Gamuda undertakes in adopting the values of moderation.

"When we recognise differences and put these aside for the greater goal, we tend to be aware of the need to help and develop others," said Ubull.

For example, the Gamuda Tunnel Training Academy has equipped different groups of local youths with skills such as underground tunnelling works and working with TBM, and placed them with jobs on the KVMRT (Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit) project.

About 1,000 young Malaysians have been trained and developed through this programme, an achievement Ubull is most proud of.

"We see the positives of this programme. These young people have built self-confidence and self-esteem, strengths that will help them through their growth and career for many more years to come," he added.

It was this ethos that spurred Gamuda to support the Star Golden Hearts Award 2016.

"People don't just learn from experience; they also learn from training. And that's why I find programmes like this very important.

"Part of training is exposure to good practice, to the good that others have done, so you can follow in their footsteps," said Ubull.

In its second year, the Star Golden Hearts Award continues to cele-



Know any person or group who has helped others in need, regardless of race & religion? Nominate them for the Star Golden Hearts Award 2016. This year's Star Golden Hearts Award is supported by Gamuda.

A Star-Gamuda Inspiration Award: Towards a Moderate Malaysia winner will also be chosen from the pool of 10 recipients of the Star Golden Hearts Award 2016. This winner must fit the criteria of altruism and moderation. For details, go to thestar.com.my/stargoldenheartsaward

brate Malaysia's everyday heroes from all walks of life, who act in a selfless manner to build bridges between different communities, and promote racial harmony and unity. Ten winners will be selected.

In addition, there will be a *Star-Gamuda Inspiration Award: Towards A Moderate Malaysia*, of which the recipient will be chosen from among the 10 winners of the Star Golden Hearts Award.

"The recipient would have done something very impactful for society and inspired many with his or her actions or efforts. It would be something that people can take as an example to follow," he said.

Ubull also wants to see more of Malaysia's youth being nominated for the Star Golden Hearts Award.

"If the young have this type of mindset or nature, it's very good for the country. That's what we work for, and that's what we promote within the company. We spend a lot of effort to shape their minds; to be united and do more for society," said Ubull, who has several mentees under his wing.

"After all, when we work with people of different strengths and different backgrounds, we are able to form stronger teams. We are able to learn from each-other and leverage on different strengths for the better good," he added.

The closing date for Star Golden Hearts Award 2016 nominations is Sept 30. You can e-mail your nomination to editor@thestar.com.my, with the subject: Star Golden Hearts Award nomination.