

Everyone who serves the country is deemed a frontliner

By [Dzulkifli Abdul Razak](#) - September 3, 2022 @ 12:02am



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The 65th Merdeka celebrations this year carried some momentous events that had not been seen in a long time.

These are moments that make Merdeka what it should be beyond the act of decorating premises as a symbolic gesture, albeit routine activities.

Even then, we hear warnings to fly the flag or else. It is indeed sad that some need to be coerced to "celebrate" the historic day. Hopefully, they are small in number.

Conversely, many more are grateful for the blessings it brings despite the Covid-19 challenges faced recently, which threatened the lives of practically all citizens. They are also the same people who dutifully facilitate the #kitajagakita defensive lines in ensuring that Malaysia remains safe and sound.

Without them, especially the frontliners, the Merdeka festivities would have been impossible to undertake. This reaffirms that our sovereignty is alive and firmly intact as a proud nation.

Nevertheless, it is not only the health frontliners that we need to recognise but also the armed forces, police and other security and safety units. Not forgetting the civil societies and voluntary bodies, which unite Malaysians in upholding the nation's collective wellbeing.

It re-emphasises what the nation is about when up against a phenomena not experienced before. Towards this end, artistes and spokespersons should not be left out in their contributions, especially this time around.

A case in point is producer Syamsul Yusof with his epic film, *Mat Kilau — Kebangkitan Pahlawan*, which garnered close to RM100 million in a record box office collection for a local production. Indonesia is believed to be planning to screen the movie in 200 theatres soon.

That all these coincided with the run-up to the 65th Merdeka celebrations served as a reminder of the sacrifices made in the fight for independence during the British colonial period, indeed the Portuguese and Dutch colonial periods too.

The film tells about the rise of a Malay warrior named Mat Kilau and his compatriots against the colonialists in Pahang in 1890. The greed of British officials and policies, including excessive taxes and confiscation of land belonging to the Malays, robbed the state of its treasures and disrupted the Islamic way of life.

This caused dissatisfaction among the people and Mat Kilau was called to use his heroic spirit to tackle the barbaric and greedy acts of the colonial masters.

Mat Kilau brings back memories of people who fought for independence. They were no doubt the "frontliners" too.

Despite having minimal weaponry compared with the intruders, they persevered like all "frontliners". They were disciplined by the potent "weapons" inherent in them — patriotism and a sense of honour — to ensure that the country and people were safeguarded and protected.

Fast forward to the Communist insurgency, several heroes emerged to fight the "invisible" enemies among the local population and hidden by the lush forests. They were everywhere and nowhere at the same time in uncanny ways, putting pressure on the enemies.

Notwithstanding, the overall lives and materials lost were not in vain since the notion of a larger family of the citizenry was well ingrained, allowing the country to push forward against all odds to bring pride and joy to every citizen.

The most recent example is when Malaysia reclaimed its position in the badminton arena through shuttlers Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik, who created history by becoming Malaysia's first World Champions in Tokyo on Aug 28. The world No. 6 pair secured a superb victory over Indonesia's three-time world champions Mohammad Ahsan-Hendra Setiawan.

All said and done, this is the best gift for the 65th Merdeka yet, in particular after a long 45-year wait to win the top prize in the tournament.

Kudos Malaysia, *salam* Merdeka.

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