‘Reach out beyond main races here’

Vital to embrace diversity as landscape alters: Heng

BY PEARL LEE

SINGAPOREANS have to go beyond understanding the main races here, to respect everyone who lives and works here, regardless of their race, language, or religion, Education Minister Heng Swee Keat said in a racial harmony day speech at Fuhua Primary School in Pasir Ris, Mr Heng and Singapore had tried to do it in the Prime Minister’s Office and Second Minister packets with money, called hongbao.”

“Singaporeans move towards a more diverse landscape, it is important that we continue to embrace diversity. Let us all do our part to understand other cultures, and go beyond that, to do all we can to appreciate their cultures and traditions, and to encourage our friends to do the same."

His message was reiterated by Senior Minister of State for Law and Education Indranee Rajah, Minister for State for Education and Communications and Information Sim Ann, and Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Manpower Henry Ong Suan Seng.

They too, par- ticipated in Racial Harmony Day activities at various schools.

More than 30,000 Primary 4 pupils celebrated orange ribbons. Since the 1990s, many coun- tries have adopted the orange ribbon as a symbol of racial harmony.

The Primary 4 pupils at Elias Park Primary School were taught how to make orange ribbons. The ribbons is a symbol of racial harmony.

A pupil from Elias Park Primary School pinning an orange ribbon onto the outfit of a kindergarten pupil. More than 39,000 Primary 4 pupils celebrated Racial Harmony Day by making orange ribbons.

SAFEGUARD PEACE

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There are people in the world fighting one another over race, over religion. So we must protect this. We have to stand up for issues we care passionately about. We must promote the values of social cohesion, and freedom. In Singapore, Onepeople.sg, a platform at least at the level of managing racial and religious harmony, uses it to symbolise racial harmony.

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The July 21, 1964 racial riot showed Singapore’s landscape, it is important that we continue to embrace diversity. Let us all do our part to understand other cultures, and go beyond that, to do all we can to appreciate their cultures and traditions, and to encourage our friends to do the same."

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Racial Harmony Day is celebrated annually on July 21 to remember the racial riots.

At that time, the Malays in Singapore were upset that despite the merger with Malaysia, they would not be entitled to special privileges under the 1957 Federation of Malaya Constitution. The 1963-heat wave in Malaya and Chinese exchanged taunts and insults during a celebration of Prophet Muhammad’s birthday at the Padang on July 21.

The ensuing violence lasted five days and left 22 people dead and more than 450 injured – the highest number of casualties in Singapore since 1821.

PM Lee said: “As Singapore moves towards a more diverse landscape, it is important that we continue to embrace diversity. Let us all do our part to understand other cultures, and go beyond that, to do all we can to appreciate their cultures and traditions, and to encourage our friends to do the same.”

He urged pupils to befriend those of other cultures and practices. “Let us all do our part to understand other cultures, and go beyond that, to do all we can to appreciate their cultures and traditions, and to encourage our friends to do the same.”

Mr Heng said Singapore had thrived over race, over religion. So we must protect this.

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