

I believe that loyalty is a very important but often misunderstood and misused value. To learn my views on loyalty as one of the 8 key values of 1 Malaysia, read the transcript below.

LOYALTY

I think loyalty is important because it is a cornerstone of trust. In any relationship, loyalty is important. As a friend, for example, you're loyal to your friend, because if you're loyal to your friend, it develops trust. A personal bond between you and the other person. But I would define loyalty as something which should not be taken to the extreme where it's blind loyalty. I think in the government service, for example, the government administration, certainly one needs to be loyal to the leader. But one should also be loyal to the leader for as long as the leader is also loyal, in the sense that the leader performs, the leader is committed to his work, is dedicated. And loyalty does not mean that you cannot criticize, but of course you should criticize in the right manner, in the right place and the right time, for example. I would certainly appreciate that, whether it's in a personal relationship or in the context of my colleagues that there'll be a time and opportunity for them to offer some constructive views, for example, even criticism, which I think is necessary. But loyalty should also be coupled with ability. You cannot just reward a person just because he or she is loyal, but you forget the fact that loyalty without performance, without ability will not be adequate. Loyalty is important, yes, but it has to be coupled with other considerations as well.

Yes I think gone are the days when loyalty should be misconstrued as blind faith, or as having a carte blanche in terms of personal relationship, that you can do whatever you like, and you get away with it. I think that's wrong. I think it would be a disservice in terms of personal relationship or whether it's in the government, that there is no room for constructive criticism or even dissent. Provided it is done in a very correct manner, and with good intentions.