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A tale told by idiots

PREPOSTEROUS is a strong word. It is the felicitous adjective to dismiss utterly absurd and outrageous statements which are contrary to reason, common sense and nature. That was the apt word plucked by the Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, last Saturday, to describe the claim posted by the Opposition on a website that the July 2 arms heists in Grik and the subsequent Sauk stand-off was a sandiwara staged by Umno and the Government. "Preposterous lie" was the adjective-noun combination used by that hero of the entire episode, Lt Gen Datuk Seri Zaini Said to dismiss the same charge.

What other egregious lies will these anti-nationalists fabricate next? What transpired in Grik and Sauk is clear as daylight. Two pre-dawn raids were mounted on two armouries. News of the robberies were first carried by foreign news agencies. The subsequent siege of the hill in Sauk, where 29 members of the deviationist Al Ma'unah group were hiding with four hostages, by the police and the army was also extensively covered and reported by the media, including the foreign corps. To claim that the episode was a drama staged by Umno is manifestly a distortion of facts. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad phrased the denial with characteristic vividness. "If they say it is Umno's doing, I'll be very impressed with Umno's ability to order people who are openly anti-Umno to resort to doing something for which they would be eventually arrested and charged in court."

The group which was holed up in that Perak hill is a terrorist group. No other word describes armed robbers who abduct both civilians and security personnel and hold the entire country to ransom. Two non-Muslims were brutally tortured and killed. No God-fearing Muslim would perpetrate acts as dastardly as butchering people. The actors in that tragic episode are warped followers of deviationist teachings. To say that they were players acting out a drama staged by Umno is to say that a father wilfully arms his children to rob, take hostages and then kill those he deems non-believers.

Division of Muslims and non-Muslims is not in the credo of Umno. It does not condone violence. It does not subscribe to the great divide of believers and non-believers. It has long taken the stance that this nation of diverse races and adherents of different faiths must be united. Unity in diversity has long been the sinew and strength of this country. That belief is the anvil on which alliances of multi-racial unity were forged by Umno over the years. To gain independence, to galvanise the country to achieve development, industrial development and the good life for all its people, including guest workers both invited and unwanted. No sane Malaysian would gainsay that the Umno-led Government, comprising smart partnerships of ethnic political parties, has endowed the people with blessings they are grateful for.

We know that for many foreigners, mighty nations and the multinational media, this country, our Government and the Prime Minister can do no right. All acts, all policies are condemned. As Dr Mahathir never tires of saying, we have to live with these damnations. But we have endured. That is what matters. But it is sad that a few among our people have joined that foreign chorus of Cassandras. And the heinous allegation that Umno was behind the Perak episode, surely is a tale told by idiots, signifying nothing.

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