

08/08/2000

Punish criminals, don't politicise Sauk episode

M. Abdullah

AS one of the many responsible citizens of this country, I am concerned at the media reports on the Grik arms robbery saga.

I would like to congratulate your paper for having highlighted the recent arms heist fiasco which had attracted worldwide media attention as well as negative and distorted reports.

Like many other patriotic Malaysians, we owe our gratitude to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who appeared in a live interview on national television on July 20.

The Prime Minister has been extremely careful with his words in order to avoid media distortions. Dr Mahathir's crystal clear explanations and opinions will certainly clear most of the darker patches of this unfortunate and senseless saga that may destroy the resilience of our nation-building and sovereignty.

In a serious and uncompromising tone, the Prime Minister cautioned the nation to be more alert to the possible consequences of the Grik incident. The spinoff may threaten our national security.

As a fellow Muslim, my family and I certainly worry about the Al-Ma'unah's misinterpretation of the Quran as well as the Hadith to promote their "supernatural" agendas.

We are saddened that some of the Islamic fundamentalists from the Opposition said the Grik episode was a sandiwara staged by Umno and Barisan Nasional.

In the national interest, let us not politicise this episode. We should stop humiliating our uniformed staff, from ordinary soldiers to the generals.

As a former diplomat who has served the nation, I would like to see punishment meted out to the guilty parties. These unpatriotic bandits should be sent for rehabilitation or perhaps to Tanjung Rambutan's Hospital Bahagia. The State, irrespective of our religious and political beliefs, should not condone such dangerous and subversive acts of treason.

We appeal to the Minister of Home Affairs, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, to view the current religious problem in a more concise and positive perspective, to institute the highest prosecutions, even under the Internal Security Act, to those who have made a mockery of the legal institutions enshrined in the Constitution.

Perhaps Tan Sri Musa Hitam, as chairman of the Human Rights Commission, should also review the shocking state of our national security.

It is sad to conclude that those who believe in the greatness of Islam have taken the liberty to destroy the rightful existence of others for a so-called jihad.

The fugitives chose to kill and torture non-Muslims with no regard for humanity.