

## **Why Christian PM? Why not Sikh, or Sufi...**

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For once something sensible comes out of the mouths of our ministers. I think Cabinet Minister Bernard Dompok was either brave, or foolish, when he ventured out to say that Malaysia's prime minister may be of any religion. He surely echoes what many Malaysian were thinking when Utusan Malaysia caused the furore about having a plot to install a Christian PM.

While I thought Utusan's claim of replacing the official religion Islam with Christianity was preposterous, on the point of the PM's religion, I thought, so what?

Dompok reportedly said, "As for the question of a Christian prime minister, what is wrong with that? Although I do not see this happening in Malaysia." and it no doubt brings some comfort to some Malaysians of any religious persuasion, if any.

What troubles me with Dompok's reply is the second part, that he does not see this happening. I ask, why not?

If someone is qualified to run a country, does it matter what religion he or she is of as long as the person is Malaysian? Isn't that what 1Malaysia is about? Can we even know that a Muslim PM is truly a good Muslim? If not, then what?

In the spirit of the call by letter writer Modern Malaysian, why should we not have the best person capable, as PM, regardless of the candidate's religion? Don't Malaysians deserve the best man/woman for the job, rather than the politically expedient one?

As it stands today, we have to accept whoever the ruling party puts forth as the PM. Perhaps one day we will be able to vote for our PM, based on what the candidate has done, and can potentially do, through answering questions and debate with the rakyat and oppositions, rather than through lavish 1Malaysia dinners and nice sounding rhetoric.

Of course this is wishful thinking. Based on our politics now, we are happy just to be able to have a PM from the dominant party that wins the election, whoever that may be, and pray that the person does a decent job.

If Malaysians of all races and beliefs were to move forward, we should slowly work away from the present mentality, whatever our constitution does or does not say.

I for one would not mind at all having a Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Sufi or Animist prime minister, even one from a minority race, even if I do not belong to any of these groups. I do not care if the person is Chinese, or Kadazan or Dayak or Temuan. I care that the candidate can do a good job.

As a Chinese I have long awakened from the illusion that only a member of my own race will serve me better than one of another. I hope other Malaysians of all races wake up and realise this as well. All politicians serve no one but their own interest.

The only one who can serve us is the one willing to be held accountable, and work honestly and practice transparency.

The day we move away from having ministers who 'represent our race' is the day we become a developed nation that Najib's GTP or ETP or whatever aspires to be or whatever Vision 2020 is.

Until then, all talk about progress or vision is rubbish.

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