

**KFC fracas: Conflict resolution, Pakatan-style**  
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COMMENT What looks like the evolving sequel to the fracas at the KFC outlet at iCity, Shah Alam, is providing a foretaste of what the Pakatan Rakyat module of conflict resolution for inner-city disputes would look like should they take power in the upcoming general election.

A video uploaded on YouTube of a fight that broke out after what appears to be a nerve-wracking imbalance between the demand and supply of fried chicken at a KFC outlet had the potential to engender a racially-inflamed postlude.

The 27-second video went viral on the net. With its potential to spawn racially-charged comments, there lay the seedbed for sectarian misunderstanding and conflict.

Fortunately, this prospect was forestalled by the peace-making aplomb of two Pakatan MPs.

Into the threatened breach stepped Lim Lip Eng (Segambut) and Khalid Samad (Shah Alam), bearing mediating initiatives of fact-finding - indispensable, as always, for conflict-resolution - and an offer for a negotiated settlement after their intercessory efforts made things obvious that the dispute had no more inflammatory nub than an imbalance between supply and demand and the consequent frazzled nerves leading to fists thrown in fury.

Lim started the mediation ball rolling by organising a press conference a few days after the incident occurred and a couple after the video had gone viral on the net.

The press conference saw the injured party to the fracas tell his story. To his credit, Daniel Ng did not affect the aura of the much-wronged victim in his narrative of what happened.

After Ng's version hogged the headlines on the web news portals, the video maker came out with her side of the story.

Her version strengthened the growing hypothesis that a shortage of fried chicken and the nervous anxiety that had occasioned was the cause of the fight at KFC's iCity outlet in Shah Alam, and not racially-tinged thrash talk that could have accompanied the hubbub.

Thanks to the two Pakatan MPs, the stage has been set for an amicable resolution of the dispute.

Facts on the cause of the dispute have been affirmed, as a consequence of which tempers are calmed and cyber commentary restrained.

The 'Allah' imbroglio

This module of conflict pacification and resolution follows the one whose outlines had congealed when the dispute over Christians' use of the term 'Allah' occurred a little over two years ago, following a High Court decision that upheld a Catholic Church publication's use of the term.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church petaling jayaAs the dispute flared in the public arena, Pakatan leaders, led by Anwar Ibrahim, went into a huddle and emerged with the finding that Muslims do not have an exclusive right to the term; Jews and Christians could also use the term.

However, this did not prevent assorted politicians hitting the demagogic trail, venting their spleen at the court decision even as incendiary elements torched church buildings and property.

But Pakatan's principal leaders like Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Aziz Nik Mat and Anwar steered by the course of submitting facts to a candid public and allowing the latter to decide whether they want to be inflamed by superstition or enlightened and becalmed by fact.

Pakatan MPs Lim and Khalid have emulated this module in their intervention in the KFC outlet dispute, with results that are looking every bit as promising as antecedent overtures in the 'Allah' imbroglio did in early 2010.

Of course, this is going to deprive Hasan Ali of grist for his inflammatory mill, though that does not seem the case with Perkasa types, as its secretary-general has already found fault with the comments posted on the web on the KFC dispute.

Character is destiny, as the Greeks say, but the destiny of a post-BN Malaysia need not follow BN or Perkasa outlines.

As suggested by the better angles of the Malaysian spirit, to use a phrase from Abraham Lincoln, that destiny as prompted by MPs Lim and Khalid in their KFC mediation effort is set to flower in a Pakatan ascendancy.

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