

Pua: Is Najib for national reconciliation or aggravation?

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Despite Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak calling for "national reconciliation" after the general election, his party and related machinery appear to have gone the opposite direction.

They are doing this by engaging in "national aggravation" in the area of race relations, DAP national publicity secretary and MP for petaling Jaya Utara Tony Pua said today.

NONE"The situation, with absolutely no restraint from Umno president Najib himself, is spiralling out of control, worsening race relations to its lowest ebb in recent decades," Pua said in a press statement.

He pointed to Umno-owned daily Utusan Malaysia's tirade, which began with a headline entitled: "What more do the Chinese want?" This was followed by "racist quotes" from Umno and NGO leaders who called Chinese Malaysians ingrates on a daily basis.

Pua pointed out that Utusan had also launched attacks on AirAsia X chief executive officer Azran Osman Rani for speaking out against the Malay-language daily's racism.

NONE"It has become shocking how those who stand against racism are being vilified in the mainstream media owned by Umno and BN," he said.

This was on top of calls by pro-Umno NGOs to boycott goods sold by Chinese companies, which newly-minted Domestic Trade, Consumerism and Cooperatives Minister Hasan Malek said the government does not endorse but that the NGOs had a right to do so.

"Such a lame response to a racist attempt to divide the nation certainly leaves much to be desired.

"It is certainly true that people can choose to be racist, but it is the moral duty of the government to demonstrate leadership by discouraging and rebuking such racist actions and causes," Pua said.

'Najib fired first salvo'

Meanwhile, DAP national adviser Lim Kit Siang said the series of racist tirades was fuelled by Najib, who dismissed the outcome of the 13th general election as a "Chinese tsunami" when it was a Malaysian and urban tsunami.

"Najib's deplorable statement was the signal for the race-baiting and further racial polarisation in the past fortnight," Lim said.

dap special meeting 110313 lim kit siang 2He called on Najib not to allow the race-baiting to persist by reining in his party and supporters.

"Najib has wasted too much time and he should show immediate leadership to end the unprecedented racist nastiness arising from the poor Umno/BN performance in 13th general election, or he would have failed and reneged from his promise to be prime minister for all Malaysians," Lim said.

Lauding National Unity and Integration Department director-general Azman Amin Hassan' statement, which called for an end to the racial blame game as the general election showed youths voting across racial lines, Lim said Azman's statement should be compulsory reading for the entire cabinet.

'Gov't should listen to unity director-general'

"Better still, Azman should be invited to give a briefing about the new racial nastiness that has surfaced in the country after the 13th general election and which must be ended immediately with leadership by example by Najib and the cabinet, if all the talk of 'national reconciliation' is to have any meaning," he said.

In an interview in News Straits Times yesterday, Azman had said he was alarmed by the headlines in the newspapers.

"Even though it was meant for Malay readers, the way the arguments went could incite the general public. It was worrisome and I think the Home Ministry should intervene and put a stop to it, not only to that paper, but any other paper that crosses that line,"Azman is quoted as saying.

Lim added: "Azman said the National Unity Department is ready to move forward. But the more important question is whether Najib and his cabinet are ready to move forward by ending the unprecedented racist nastiness initiated by irresponsible and disloyal individuals and groups."

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