

Najib told to get over 'kangkung phobia'

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DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang today said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak should deal with the underlying cause of the "kangkung phenomenon" instead of being paranoid about the matter.

"What is most regrettable and must be condemned by all right-thinking Malaysians is the dishonest and dangerous game of political opportunists who tried to racialise the 'kangkung furore' as the work of Chinese showing disrespect to Malay leaders.

"Instead of indulging in a 'kangkung phobia' and hitting out at all and sundry involved in the 'kangkung furore', Najib and the BN leadership should swiftly identify the underlying reasons as to why an inadvertent reference to the price of kangkung should set off such a 'kangkung tsunami'," he said in a statement today.

Lim (right) said the "kangkung furore" is a reflection of the rakyat's concern about the continued corruption in the country amid a rising cost of living.

Najib had on Jan 12 said people were critical of the government when prices of essential goods up but were not thankful when the price of kangkung, a vegetable that grows in the wild, went down recently.

His remarks earned brickbats on social media for being insensitive as the rakyat cope with increasing cost of living from pricier electricity and petrol to costlier sugar and bus fares.

It also spawned a frenzy of jokes, from a remix of Najib's kangkung speech to kangkung T-shirts.

'Umno members disconnected'

Meanwhile in a separate statement, PKR's Machang Bubuk state assemblyperson Lee Khai Loon said that the angry reactions from Umno members over a flash mob where kangkung had been stuffed into the mouth of an effigy of Najib, indicate their disconnect about the rakyat's woes.

"I do not understand why Umno-BN and their supporters would equate it as being an insult.

"It is a creative and symbolic action to demand that the prime minister be more concerned about the rakyat's burden made worse by the rising cost of living," said Lee in a statement today.

Lee (left), who was the organiser behind the Wednesday stunt in Penang, said he was merely doing his duty as a state assemblyperson by raising the voice of the people, albeit in a creative manner.

Angry Umno members in Penang today protested in defence of Najib over the kangkung jokes, and even put up banners querying if the opposition wanted another May 13 riot.

"I hope Najib and Umno-BN leaders will listen to the rakyat's voice and not engage in personal attacks (against me) and playing up racial sentiments," added Lee.

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