

Perkasa veep: Sorry's no cure to racism

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Prior to the last general election, a video recording surfaced showing Perkasa vice-president Zulkifli Noordin insulting the Hindu religion, for which he later apologised.

And when MIC protested over him being named as the BN candidate for the Shah Alam parliament seat, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin (left) reminded critics that Zulkifli had apologised and should be forgiven.

But now, the Perkasa leader claims that an apology is not sufficient.

In his latest blog posting, Zulkifli lamented that the Chinese school teacher who labelled two of her students as cows, tied bells on them and forced them to eat grass had been let off with a slap on the wrist.

The two Standard Four students of SJKC Khai Meng in Perak, Muhammad Nasvinder Muhammad Amit dan Mohd Izat Iqbal Mohd, were also caned.

Zulkifli said that he had expected the teacher to be subjected to sterner punishment.

"But no... Malaysia which is governed by a Malay government is very tolerant and accommodating. The teacher was merely transferred and that too because the teacher's action had 'tainted the name of the Education Ministry'.

"The reputation of the ministry is so valuable, more valuable than the dignity of our religion and race," he said in a blog posting.

The Perkasa vice-president said the teacher's actions not only violated the children's rights but was also a form of torture that is bound to leave them traumatised.

"It is not only inhumane but also racist, since two other Chinese students who also did not complete their homework were not punished. I view these incidents as an extreme racial virus which must be curbed," he added.

How long will apologies suffice?

Zulkifli also recounted the incident where a Muslim teacher at a Chinese school in Johor was asked to remove her tudung by the chairperson of the school board.

"Once again, the Malay government's tolerance shone when it issued a warning not to repeat the incident after the school board chairperson reportedly apologised," he added.

The Perkasa leader also asked what would have happened if a Malay teacher had hung a pig's head or punished Chinese students by insinuating that they are pigs?

Zulkifli questioned for how long would these incidents be treated as isolated cases, which could be resolved with a mere apology.

"I can list out numerous incidents which smack of racial and religious bigotry which are the deliberate work of a handful of chauvinists who are let off the hook with an apology.

"Excusing them on the ground of an apology would only embolden these racists and chauvinists," he said referring to Namewee and "many more Chinese kids".

Zulkifli also called for an in-depth research to determine if these racist and extremist attitudes were products of vernacular schools.

"If this is true, we must be bold enough to carry out changes and transformation, including closing vernacular schools if they are found to be breeding grounds for chauvinists, racists and extremists," he said.

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