

## **'If prince gets whacked, what more rakyat?'**

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Johor crown prince Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim voiced a gentle reminder for those in power, and this earned him a "hooligan-like" response from a minister.

This led former Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) advisory panel member Robert Phang to wonder what the rakyat would encounter for questioning ruling politicians.

He also called on Tourism and Culture Minister Nazri Abdul Aziz (photo) to apologise to the prince if the latter considered himself a "cultured and civilised" member of Parliament.

"It is very clear that Tunku Ismail merely voiced his opinion that those who have been entrusted with the responsibility (to lead) must not blame the people for losing trust and confidence in them, but to think why the people no longer have confidence and trust in them.

"The rakyat totally agree with such a gentle reminder (but) it was met with a hooligan-style response from a minister.

"If Tunku Ismail received such a reply, then what chances do we, the rakyat, have?" he asked in a statement.

### **More must come forward**

Phang (photo), who is chairperson of the Social Care Foundation, commended Tunku Ismail for making a stand.

"Malaysians more so Johoreans must come forward to remind the leaders of the country that they have a responsibility to serve the people respectfully.

"It is clear Tunku Ismail has merely spoken out of concern for the rakyat," he added.

Phang, who said he was "disturbed" by Nazri's reaction, accused the minister of setting a bad example for the younger generation.

"Enough is enough. As an elected MP, I pray Nazri wakes up and has the guts to sincerely apologise to Tunku Ismail," he added.

Phang was also "bewildered" by the minister's explanation that his remarks were intended to protect the royal institution.

"You (Nazri) could have used a better term, more so against the monarchy. Our Malaysian culture does not allow such insolent statements," he said.

Nazri had warned Tunku Ismail that he risked being "whacked" if the prince meddled in politics.

This was after the prince mocked Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak for failing to turn up at the 'Nothing to Hide' dialogue.

Nazri has refused to back down, saying he was merely defending the prime minister and reminded the prince, that unlike him, Tunku Ismail was not elected by the people.

Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin yesterday also defended Nazri's reprimand of the Johor crown prince.

Khairy said Tunku Ismail's had alluded that Najib had "something to hide", which he said was regrettable.

"He must not make general statements about the prime minister without in-depth details despite his right to voice out," Khairy was quoted as saying by The Star.

Khairy said even though the manner in which Nazri reprimanded the prince was "debatable, but he was agreeable with the minister's message.

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