

DAP's Pua to DPM: Your taskforce is 'ridiculous'
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin has set a ridiculous precedent of setting up a high-level taskforce to investigate allegations of racist remarks by a school principal, said DAP's national publicity secretary and Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua.

NONE Since Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, has taken this unusual step following the police reports and public outcry against SMK Tunku Abdul Rahma Putra principal Siti Inshah Mansor, he will now have no choice but to set up a committee to investigate every such remarks, said Pua (right).

NONE "The setting up of the investigation taskforce is clearly an afterthought by the minister after the attempt by the ministry's director-general Alimuddin Mohd Dom to waive away the issue by claiming that the issue has been "resolved" as it was due to a "misunderstanding" backfired when the public voiced their outrage at the cover up by the ministry of education.

"Unfortunately, the public does not have any confidence at all that the taskforce will be able to produce a satisfactory outcome as the minister himself has set the tone for the taskforce," said Pua in a statement.
Slur on National Day celebration

It was claimed in police reports lodged by the parents of several student from secondary school in Kulai, Johor, that Inshah had uttered the offending remarks during the launch of the school's National Day celebration.

She had also allegedly gave an example of owning a Proton Saga and then letting 'Munusamy' and 'Chong' in as passengers.

"Munusamy and Chong were only passengers. They cannot claim any right to the car. This is the same as Malaysia in which the non-Malay students are passengers," alleged a 16-year-old student in his police report on what she had said.

A total of 17 police reports have been lodged so far.

Reacting to the uproar, Alimuddin reportedly said: "There is no change, the issue was only a misunderstanding and the problem has been solved between the principal and students."

NONE Pua said Muhyiddin (left) had also chosen to complicate an otherwise straightforward matter of determining if the words were indeed spoken - especially when there were many witnesses to the alleged remarks by Inshah - by his emphasis on a cross-departmental probe.

"While it is certainly fair for the principal to receive a "full and thorough investigation", the emphasis by the minister that it will involve several agencies is a clear attempt to unnecessarily prolong the investigation despite the obvious fact that Siti Inshah has apologised to the students for the offence," said Pua.

wee ka siong interview 220310 01 He also compared Muhyiddin's stance to that of Deputy Education Minister Wee Ka Siong (right), who had remarked that it was "not appropriate for principal to pass those remarks," whereas Muhyiddin has refused even to condemn the remarks in principle.

"The question is, why is he, who is also the deputy prime minister, so reluctant to condemn such remarks and warn others in the Education Ministry from ever doing the same or face the harshest of consequences?"

"His action, or in this case, inaction, has further damaged the 1Malaysia concept proposed by the Prime Minister, Najib Abdul Razak, to promote national unity," said Pua.

What is perhaps most telling in Muhyiddin's setting up of this investigation taskforce is the fact that there was no deadline set for presenting its findings and recommendations when a week would have been more than sufficient to wrap up the whole case, he added.

'DPM not serious'

Charging Muhyiddin with lacking seriousness in getting to the bottom of matter and demonstrating that his ministry would not tolerate such serious offences by its officers, Pua said forming the taskforce is merely meant to temporarily placate furious parents and upset Malaysians "while the ministry buys time for itself to "resolve" the issue."

The precedent of setting up such a taskforce for the purpose may trigger a tidal wave of them, said Pua, citing the emergence of a similar case in Sungai Petani, Kedah.

"Will the education minister announce another taskforce to investigate these claims? Will more taskforces be set up as more such offences gets reported?" Pua added.

"We call upon the Muhyiddin to stop pussyfooting over the issue and demonstrate his commitment to 1Malaysia by condemning outright such remarks and giving a warning to all teachers and principals that those found guilty of doing so will be punished most severely including being sacked.

"If Muhyiddin still refuses to take quick action on the above, then it is imperative for the prime minister himself to take all necessary steps to hold together his fragile 1Malaysia brainchild, if the concept still means anything to him."

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