

## **'Strip the vandals of citizenship'**

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Those found guilty of vandalising the surau in Negri Sembilan should have their citizenship revoked, said the MCA in calling for serious condemnation of yesterday's incident.

"The attack violates the basic tenets of the Rukunegara and the culprits, if ever apprehended, should be stripped of their citizenship," said deputy publicity chairperson Loh Seng Kok in a statement.

Warning that this act appears targeted to unleash societal tensions, he said the party is aghast and alarmed at "the cowardly act" that saw red paint splashed on the walls of a new surau in Taman Pulaui Impian Temiang, near Seremban.

"While MCA will not mince our words in condemning such a heinous misdeed, (we) call on Malaysians to remain calm and to enable the police to conduct a thorough investigation," he said.

"In times like this, Malaysians must not allow emotions to over-rule reason, because if that happens, the extremists... will emerge victorious."

He referred to several incidents in January that had targeted places of worship, and how these had evoked solidarity among Malaysians in supporting harmony.

"This clearly indicated that Malaysians reject any form of attack against religious places and will not be cowed into fear by miscreants out to spark national upheaval. Such vandalism is the work of a minority," he added.

"Once again, I am certain that peace-loving Malaysians will know better than to fall into the trap of these troublemakers who only want to pit Malaysians of different faiths against each other by sowing hatred, fear and distrust and desiring revenge to enable counter reprisals."

'Evil deed'

Others have also come forward to slam the incident, describing it as an "evil" and "irresponsible" deed.

In a statement, Umno Youth said the incident "is cruel and completely unacceptable".

"In fact, this has violated the purity of the month of Ramadan which is ... holy for Muslims. We hope the police will act swiftly to investigate this matter and bring the perpetrators to justice," it said.

"Umno Youth urges all Muslims to remain calm and not to be involved in the polemic of speculation. Anyone with information ... should go to the police immediately."

Gerakan president Koh Tsu Koon - also the minister in charge of national unity and performance management - urged the public not to speculate on this, make unsubstantiated allegations, or listen to or spread rumours.

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