



**NUTP: Suspending principal won't end racist remarks**  
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The Education Ministry may have issued several circulars addressing issues related to race relations in schools, but they lack enforcement said National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary-general Lok Yim Pheng.

Lok was responding to Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's (*right*) statement yesterday that his ministry has no jurisdiction to take action against the 'racist' Bukit Selambau principal.

The deputy premier disclosed that the ministry had wrapped up its investigation and handed the report over to the Public Service Department (PSD) to act on Ungku Aznan Ungku Ismail, the principal of SMK Bukit Selambau in Sungai Petani who had allegedly made racist remarks against his Chinese students.

Lok told *Malaysiakini* that the PSD appoints the principals and is responsible for their promotion, therefore only the department can take the necessary disciplinary action.

Action could vary from a warning letter, salary deduction or suspension. To some extent the principal could even be demoted.

"But demotion is rare and almost never happens. The department can also withdraw the principals' annual emoluments," said Lok.

Lok laments that while punishments may be meted out to avoid recurrence of incidences, no one is learning from the experiences.

She doubts that such measures will end the problem.

Sustainable change needed

"Changes need to be made to solve the matter (conclusively). There are already guidelines from the ministry on these things, and it needs to be taken seriously," said Lok.

"We need sustainable changes; that is how we move forward. Right now our only goal is to foster unity," she said.

An apparent lack of disciplinary action against the Bukit Selambau principal has angered MCA, that now threatens to protest if no action is taken.

Earlier this month, *Malaysiakini* reported that Ungku Aznan, although "temporarily suspended", was reassigned to the district education office at Kuala Muda/Yan, Sungai Petani, for a week.

Ungku Aznan earned national infamy last month when, upon seeing some Chinese students having breakfast at the school canteen during fasting month, had allegedly ticked off the students during the next morning assembly calling for them to "go back to China".

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