

**National unity unattainable under BN**  
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After half-a-century of independence, we should be firmly on the road to unity and national harmony. Unfortunately, there are depraved elements - mostly tolerated and even encouraged by the silence of the Umno leaders - who embark on a campaign to destroy this unity and harmony by constantly uttering seditious sentiments without being reprimanded.

The indifference shown to seditious statements which disparage the non-Malays has been taken to mean that it is alright to run down the non-Malays. We have numerous instances that seem to support this view.

Even the latest two instances give credence to this opinion. We had the case of the principal of SMK Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra in Kulaijaya, Johor, who had blatantly told the Chinese students to go back to China and had referred to the Indians as resembling dogs with their prayer strings.

What is so upsetting about this incident is that she wasn't publicly admonished and subsequently no disciplinary action was taken against her. In fact, the Director-General of Education Alimuddin Mohd Dom unbelievably dismissed such a serious issue as 'just a misunderstanding.'

Strangely, the prime minister and the education minister also held their peace and said nothing about this outrage. What happened was an unforgivable offence that had clearly undermined the '1Malaysia' concept propagated by the prime minister himself and yet he failed to see the repercussions that followed.

Malaysians have every right to be disappointed with our national leaders in this instance. When the prime minister and the deputy prime minister did not take this issue seriously, it sent the wrong signals.

That is the reason why another bigoted head in Kedah was bold enough to utter similar seditious remarks soon after the Johor incidence. He had told the Chinese students of SMK Bukit Selambau to go back to China for having breakfast outside the school canteen during the Ramadan fasting month.

Again this issue was not viewed seriously neither was he disciplined sternly. It gave the impression that it was alright to be rude and seditious to the non-Malays and that the crude behavior of these bigots can be tolerated and even condoned.

When we returned to parliamentary democracy after the agonizing episode of May13, wasn't it decided that the citizenship of the non-Malays would be beyond question? Wasn't it determined that anyone who questioned this right would be committing sedition?

That being the case, why are these bigots allowed to get away without any consequence when they flout the federal constitution? Why isn't the cabinet addressing this serious issue and demand for action against these culprits? These two depraved heads of schools have gone against the federal constitution and therefore deserve to be charged in a court of law.

Why aren't they being charged? Why are they not being disciplined? Why are they being tolerated for their seditious statements? It is really bewildering when the deputy prime minister -

the second foremost powerful politician and leader of the country - pathetically says that he has no power to take action against the two school principals who had uttered racial slurs.

Come, come Mr. Deputy Prime Minister. You don't have to take disciplinary action against them personally. You are not expected to. There are mechanisms that can take care of this disciplinary problem. Just instruct the Public Services Department to take stern action. When such instruction goes out, you would have set in motion the mechanism to take care of this problem.

When so directed, the PSD would have sprung into action and the course of justice would have been served adequately. But this was not the case in this instance. While the education minister cannot understandably take action personally, he has the right and a moral duty to condemn these bigots in the strongest language.

Why didn't he do that? If this had been done, the second incident would not have taken place. Who would have defied the deputy prime minister to commit this sacrilege? By not taking to task the first principal in Johor, he had paved the way for the second principal to repeat this outrageous offence. For this, Aliran holds him responsible.

The prime minister, the deputy prime minister, the cabinet and the police should have acted but they failed us and the nation miserably. They have come across not as guardians of our national unity but as people who have failed to uphold the rule of law.

Their often repeated platitudes on national unity and the need to respect the rights of others come across as hollow utterances lacking in sincerity when they don't display political will to stomp this outrage in the first instance.

If our national unity is at risk of being destroyed the blame lies at the feet of the Barisan Nasional government. And as long as it does not take stern action to stem this outrage at the outset, it will remain accused of indifference and destroying our unity and harmony.

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