

Najib Is Protecting Perkasa
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To paraphrase a famous quote from Shakespeare's Hamlet, "The Prime Minister doth protest too much, methinks."

It would appear that is the case today when Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak is trying to fool the public into believing that the use of "white pows" at Perkasa's Chinese New Year gathering last Sunday has nothing to do with Barisan Nasional.

Najib also said that the incident was a learning experience for race relations in Malaysia. How can Najib dismiss this extremely disrespectful and insensitive gesture so frivolously, when white packets are traditionally used for Chinese funerals? The failure of the Prime Minister to condemn Perkasa for such a disparaging gesture shows how protective Najib is of Perkasa even at the expense of trampling over the sensitivities of the Chinese community.

Now, Najib is quickly trying to distance himself from the fiasco by claiming that Ibrahim Ali is an independent member of parliament and holds no official position, thus he has nothing to do with Barisan Nasional or the Government.

No one believes this. Only two years ago in an Al Jazeera interview, Najib himself had defended Perkasa by saying that they are "not so extreme" if one understood their demands, and that Perkasa can be accommodated by the Umno-led Government. And while he is an "independent MP" by name, Ibrahim Ali has always openly supported BN and Najib against Pakatan Rakyat.

On top of that, UMNO and BN has consistently supported Perkasa, attended their functions, and have even adopted their views on national policies. Even MCA has been exposed as openly assisting Perkasa when their Sri Desa Branch Chairman and Seputeh division committee member Dr Tiew Chew Ming was reported to have spoken on behalf of Perkasa as saying that Perkasa fights for all people regardless of race and had also arranged for people to attend this Perkasa function.

The late Dr Zainal Aznam, a member of the National Economic Advisory Council (NEAC) that drafted the New Economic Model (NEM), had even blamed the BN Government for submitting to Perkasa by dropping the proposed Equal Opportunities Commission, which was supposed to be part of the NEM. This happened following protests by Perkasa against the NEM.

Compounding this, time and time again Malaysians have seen Ibrahim Ali and Perkasa have been getting away with the most seditious actions and statements. Despite acts such as the burning of Bersih Chairperson Ambiga's picture, calling her a "dangerous Hindu woman" and warning the Chinese not to come out on July 9 to join the Bersih 2.0 demonstration because "anything can happen", no action whatsoever has been taken on Perkasa.

It is thus crystal clear that Perkasa has the support of the UMNO and BN leadership as well as UMNO's paper Utusan Malaysia, when they can get away with such vile and seditious threats.

Only by openly cutting off all ties and support with Perkasa can Najib and UMNO convince Malaysians that Perkasa has nothing to do with BN. The PM must realise that it is his open support for Perkasa that emboldens them to act in an intolerant manner that preaches hate and extremism as well as expose his 1Malaysia as empty sloganeering.

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