

DAP Calls On Najib To Convene A RoundTable Conference

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DAP calls on the Prime Minister, Najib Razak to convene in mid-February a RoundTable Conference of all political parties, religions and NGOs to reaffirm moderation and condemn all acts of religious desecration, particularly the dastardly incidents of pig's head outside mosques, to provoke racial and religious strife.

It must be the concern of all reasonable and patriotic Malaysians that political and public discourse and conduct in the country in the past three years have taken on an increasingly shrill, irrational and intolerant edge.

Only last month, Najib convened the inaugural International Conference on the Global Movement of the Moderates and called on moderates of the world to unite and embrace moderation and reject all forms of extremism.

Sadly, Najib's three years as Prime Minister have been marked by a creeping and insidious extremism seeking to incite racial hatred and foment religious tensions, as illustrated by the two incidents of pig's head outside mosques in the Klang Valley in two days – in Sentul yesterday and Rawang on Tuesday.

Both these acts of religious desecration, like the despicable act of arson against the Johor PAS deputy commissioner Dzulkifly Ahmad whose BMW car and house at Taman Universiti near Skudai were gutted early this morning, must be condemned in the strongest possible terms by all political parties, religious groups, NGOs and Malaysians who do not want to see Malaysia descend down the slippery slope towards political violence, racial animosity and religious strife.

This is the time for Najib to "walk the talk" of his 1Malaysia inclusiveness and call for moderates to unite against all forms of extremism – in particular to give substance to what he said at the International Conference on the Global Movement of the Moderates that "the real divide is not between Muslims and non-Muslims" but "between moderates and extremists".

Is Najib prepared to stand together with all moderates in Malaysia against the extremists, like those responsible for the dastardly incidents of pig's head outside mosques or the arson against the Johor PAS deputy commissioner?

Yesterday the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Dr. Koh Tsu Koon announced that the "highlight" of the forthcoming international week-long celebration of religious harmony will be a lunch hosted by the Prime Minister for major religious leaders on February 15.

Many Malaysians find this "highlight" announcement most laughable and pathetic as it is totally lacking in imagination and common sense.

No one could see how a lunch hosted by the Prime Minister could be a meaningful "highlight" of an international week-long celebration of religious harmony at a time when there are extremists in our midst trying their utmost to destroy Malaysia's inter-racial and inter-religious harmony with irresponsible provocative acts like two Rawang and Sentul incidents.

Instead of a Prime Minister's lunch as "highlight", it would be more meaningful instead to have a Prime Minister's RoundTable Conference of all political parties, religions and NGOs to reaffirm commitment to moderation and to condemn all acts of religious desecration and all forms of extremism, whether political, ethnic or religious, and demonstrate to all Malaysians and the world that Malaysia in 2012 is committed to be "synonymous not with extremism but with moderation, inclusivity and tolerance".

Is Najib able to rise up to the challenge of convening such a all-party/religious/NGOs

RoundTable Conference as the highlight of the forthcoming international week-long celebration of religious harmony?

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