

What Political Culture Are We Encouraging?

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By Lim Kit Siang

The question Malaysians are asking is whether the Prime Minister, Najib Razak and the Home Minister, Hishammuddin Hussein are encouraging a political culture of aggression, thuggery and violence by their failure to condemn the recent series of disruptions and attacks on Pakatan Rakyat functions.

Is this the route for Malaysia to take to become the world's best democracy as Najib had boasted after Bersih 2.0 on July 9 last year?

Is this the example Najib is setting for the world on what he meant when he called for a Global Movement of Moderates to isolate and marginalize the extremists?

Yesterday, a Pakatan Rakyat ceramah in Lembah Pantai was pelted with eggs and stones, leaving several injured and bloodied.

Earlier this week, another PR ceramah in Pekan Bangi, Selangor was disrupted by a group who threw stones at the crowd.

Last Saturday, a high-tea event in Merlimau that was scheduled to feature Bersih 2.0 co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenivasan was blocked by protestors and two DAP Malacca State Assemblymen, Khoo Poay Tiong (Ayer Keroh) and Tey Kok Kiew (Bandar Hilir) were pelted with eggs and stones, while several vehicles were damaged.

This morning, the office of PKR MP for Lembah Pantai Nurul Izzah in Pantai Dalam was pelted with more eggs while PAS Bukit Gantang MP and former Pakatan Rakyat Perak Menteri Besar Nizar Jamaluddin complained that eleven cars were splashed with blue paint at his ceramah in Kampung Sayong Lembah, Kuala Kangsar yesterday.

For more than a week, my call for the restoration of decency and civility to politics and public life in Malaysia had fallen completely on deaf ears as far as the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Home Minister and UMNO/Barisan Nasional Ministers and political leaders are concerned – although one "uncivilized" act after another had marred Malaysian politics and public life like the Perkasa "funeral rite" in front of Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng's house in Penang, the setting up of a burger stall and the "butt dance" by a group of armed forces veteran in front of Ambiga's house at Bukit Damansara, Kuala Lumpur and the demonstrations by anti-Bersih groups outside Ambiga's house yesterday.

The Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Home Minister, UMNO/Barisan Nasional Ministers and leaders are continuing to comment on all sorts of things under the sun but they are signally silent on the increase and escalation of incidents of aggression, thuggery and violence particularly at Pakatan Rakyat events and functions.

What message is Najib and Hishammuddin seeking to convey with their silence, which could only be construed as "silent blessing" for the spate of aggression, thuggery and violence at Pakatan Rakyat functions?

Najib and Hishammuddin must condemn and dissociate themselves from the increase and escalation of deplorable incidents at PR events if they do not want to be regarded as encouraging a political culture of

aggression, thuggery and violence by their prolonged silence on the recent series of disruptions and attacks on PR functions!

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