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# Be sensitive, PM tells cartoonists

**ADVICE:** Religions, sensitive matters must not be ridiculed, says Najib

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**S**ENSITIVE matters, especially those related to religions, must not be ridiculed or taken lightly by cartoonists.

Failure to do so, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak warned, would only spark extreme anger among followers of various faiths, citing *Charlie Hebdo* magazine, which had ridiculed Prophet Muhammad, as an example.

"Other faiths, including Buddhism, have their own sensitivities too.

"In this respect, I believe there is no absolute freedom (even in speech) and a lack of understanding of sensitivities of others will only trigger unrest or even conflicts among people," he said at the 2015 Kampung Boy Awards ceremony last night.

Present were Federal Territories + Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, popular cartoonist

Datuk Mohammad Nor Khalid (Lat) and Malaysia Cartoonists Club president Mohd Desa Omar.

Najib added that freedom must be accompanied with a sense of responsibility.

On political matters, the prime minister said cartoonists could depict their works on such subject matters freely and even on politicians.

He said cartoonists had their role to play, especially in nation building, promoting harmony in Malaysia's plural society and inculcating good values among the people.

Najib lauded Lat's works, which the prime minister described had depicted the true spirit of Malaysia.

"Datuk Lat can be a source of inspiration for the next generation of cartoonists," he said, adding that among his favourites were Lat's *Kampung Boy*, *Town Boy* and *Keluarga SiMamat*.

On the Malaysia Cartoonists Club's request for a club house, he said the government would look into it.

"We will consider a place for cartoonists to gather and showcase their works to the people and tourists."

The government, Najib said, would continue to support the creative industry and had allocated millions of ringgit to the industry.

"Creative works, such as cartoons,



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak flanked by Datuk Mohammad Nor Khalid (to his right) and Mohd Desa Omar, the president of the Malaysia Cartoonists Club, with the winners at the 2015 Kampung Boy Awards ceremony in Putrajaya last night. Pic by Mohd Fadli Hamzah

are capable of developing people's mind, attitude and perception about the lifestyle of ethnic communities.

"Cartoons are an effective way to deliver messages on various issues to the people as they use entertainment and sense of humour," he said.

Later, Najib presented awards to

winners of various categories which saw Jaafar Taib taking home the main Kampung Boy 2015 award for his numerous works published in local comic magazine *Gila-Gila*.

Meor Shariman Meor Hassan, popularly known as Mishar, took home the Jury Special award; Zainal Buang Hussein (Legendary Car-

toonist award); Sabariah Jais (Cabai) (the Best Cartoonist award); Fatah Ngah (Malaysiana Cartoonist award); Reggie Lee (the Editorial Cartoonist award); Saadon Ishak or Don (the Animation Cartoon Character award) and DiAtri Tajudin or Lambok (the Young Potential Cartoonist award).