

**Ex-mufti: Pakatan should rebuke its own for anti-Islam remarks**  
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**By Ida Lim**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 22 — Former Perlis Mufti Dr Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin today advised Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders to practise moderation when criticising others and not shy away from rebuking party colleagues if they breach religious boundaries.

The Muslim cleric, who was commenting on the row over DAP lawmaker Datuk Ngeh Koo Ham's remark on Twitter, said politicians on both sides of the aisle should not only attack their opponents while keeping silent when their allies make mistakes.

"For Pakatan, I hope they will be more balanced in politicking. Don't just pick on the faults of your opponents, but keep quiet when your ally makes a mistake. This is unhealthy politics.

"I also hope that Umno will be the same, practise a healthy political culture," he told The Malaysian Insider.

Asri's comments came after Ngeh apologised for asking recently over microblogging site Twitter if the protests against the anti-Islam clip "Innocence of Muslims" were a waste of "time and energy."

Ngeh, the chairman of DAP's Perak chapter, came under fire for the remark but his party colleagues had also earned the ire of Barisan Nasional (BN) politicians when they did not openly rebuke the leader for his tweet.

"I accept Ngeh Koo Ham's statement of apology, only next time, hopefully he will be careful with his comments," Asri said.

Earlier today, Ngeh said that he felt his apology should sufficiently calm Muslim anger over his remarks and urged his critics to move on from the matter to other more important issues.

He had on Thursday said that he had not meant to hurt Muslim sensitivities or belittle Islam with the offending message on Twitter.

But prime minister yesterday questioned Ngeh's sincerity, reportedly saying: "If it is that easy, we can also pass remarks, insult and ridicule other religions and later apologise."

De facto law minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz had yesterday called for the police to probe Ngeh over his remarks on the microblogging site.

Yesterday, DAP's Lim Guan Eng said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak should not be "uncharitable and small-minded" over Ngeh's apology.

He pointed out that Ngeh's apology and retraction yesterday proved that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders were more gracious and willing to admit to their mistakes or shortcomings, unlike the politicians in Najib's Barisan Nasional (BN).

Lim also told Najib to look at his own members in BN before passing any judgment against Ngeh, pointing out that many in the ruling coalition who made offensive statements in the past had not found it necessary to apologise later.

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