

**Najib should stand as a voice of moderation in Malaysia too,  
says Kit Siang  
Malaysian Insider  
July 11, 2014**

DAP has called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to be a "voice of moderation" to advocate peace and harmony, not only between the Sunni and Shia sects, but also among the religions in the country.

DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang said Najib's call for unity between the Sunni and Shia is especially welcome not only for Muslims but also for Malaysians following worsening racial and religious ties.

"Najib's message to the Muslim world to learn to set aside whatever differences among the different denominations and co-exist peacefully if it intends to guarantee its own future applies equally true and pertinent to the diverse races, religions and cultures in Malaysia," he said in a statement today.

He said this was especially so if the nation wanted to fulfil its Merdeka promise in 1957 to be "a beacon of light in a disturbed and distracted world".

Najib, in a buka puasa event in Putrajaya yesterday, called on the followers of Islam's two biggest schools – the Sunni and Shia – to unite, saying that the antagonism between both was the reason why Muslims were fighting each other in the Middle East despite having similar beliefs.

"I use the easy Sunni-Shiite analogy, likening it to us being on the same highway and heading for the same destination, but the only difference is that we are on different lanes.

"As long as we keep to our lane and not shove others which could cause an accident, we will all arrive safely at our destination," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

This is despite a recent nationwide crackdown on Shia Muslims by Malaysian religious authorities, which saw more than 100 people arrested for their ties to this school of thought.

Malaysian Muslims are mainly Sunnis and have been strongly discouraged from following Shia Islam.

Local ulama have also delivered talks in mosques and surau, attacking the Shias as the enemies of Islam while referring to the current civil war in Syria which saw Iran at loggerheads with its Gulf neighbours.

Lim, meanwhile, said today that Najib's highway analogy applied not only to Sunni and Shia Muslims, but also to the different religions in the country as the Federal Constitution has guaranteed freedom of religion in Malaysia.

"If this highway analogy had been strictly adhered to, there would not have been a crackdown on Shia Muslims in the country or the incessant stoking and incitement of racial and religious hatred, conflict and tensions in the past year," he added.

The question is, the Gelang Patah MP said, whether Najib was prepared to stand up as a leader of the country and be a "voice of moderation" in the country.

"And does Najib have a Cabinet who is prepared to give him full backing to be such a voice of moderation?" he asked. – July 11, 2014.

- See more at: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/najib-should-stand-as-a-voice-of-moderation-in-malaysia-too-says-kit-siang#sthash.ZqFhZuNg.dpuf>

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