

Najib playing 'dangerous game' by supporting Ismail Sabri, says Guan Eng
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Putrajaya is playing "a dangerous racial game" by supporting Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob's racially-tinged statement of blaming Chinese businesses for not reducing the prices of goods, says Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

This, according to Lim, is because Ismail's remark was slanderous towards the Chinese business community.

Lim said race has nothing to do with the high prices of goods as there are businesses, not only the Chinese, that charged high prices.

"They are dangerous lies that will create racial tension and chaos.

"If the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak regards this as a normal thing, it shows that Umno and Barisan Nasional have become racist and extremist. It will be a disaster because they will be prone to racism and extremism," he told reporters today.

Lim reiterated that Ismail's remark was meant to cover up important economic issues faced by the people, such as opposition against the 6% GST, which would be enforced starting April 1.

He said the government is the reason that the prices of goods were still high, despite the drop in fuel prices.

He cited how electricity tariffs and toll rates were not reduced, and how sugar and rice were under the control of the government or its cronies.

"Why didn't Ismail or the PM blame the high prices on them? Why point to just one race.

"They are playing a dangerous racial game. They are looking for scapegoats... blame one race and cover up issues.

"The PM has thrown away his 1Malaysia slogan. BN should just be dissolved, close shop," Lim said.

Yesterday, Najib defended Ismail's Facebook comment on Chinese traders, saying the Umno minister was not targeting any specific race.

The Prime Minister's Department in a statement said the Cabinet was told that Ismail's post was a reminder for all businesses to lower the price of their goods.

It said the comments were "meant to rebuke traders who refuse to lower the price of goods" despite lower fuel price.

Ismail, who is Agriculture and Agro-based Industries minister, drew flak after he reportedly posted the remark on his Facebook status in relation to prices of goods that have not gone down despite the drop in petrol and diesel prices.

Ismail wrote in his recent posting that Malay consumers had a role in helping the government fight profiteers by using their collective power to lower the price of goods.

"Forgive me for sharing my views, but besides the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism, which uses the Price Control Act and the Anti-Profiteering Act to act against traders who raise their prices indiscriminately, the greatest power lies with the consumers.

"The majority of consumers are Malay, Chinese are a minority, if the Malays boycott their businesses, they will surely have no choice but to reduce their prices," he said in a post on the social networking site.

Ismail, who is the former domestic trade and consumerism minister, confirmed to The Malaysian Insider that he had posted the statement on his Facebook account.

The minister is also embroiled in a controversial allegation he reportedly made against Perak DAP adviser Datuk Ngeh Koo Ham, whom he claimed had shares in the popular Old Town White Coffee cafe chain owned by OldTown Bhd.

"Malays are still refusing to boycott (OldTown White Coffee) what more when its owner is said to be the DAP Ngeh family of Perak, who are known to be anti-Islam.

"As long as the Malays don't change, the Chinese will take the opportunity to oppress the Malays," he said. – February 5, 2015.

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