

Title	Cabinet's firm action lauded
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# Cabinet's firm action lauded

I AM sure most Malaysians will heartily congratulate our Cabinet for swiftly rejecting the racism and bigotry that was openly expressed over the Chinese New Year decorations at SMK Pusat Bandar Puchong 1, "Cabinet-unanimous school's CNY decorations to stay" (*The Star*, Jan 9).

It is also gratifying that our Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail led a team of senior ministers to visit the school and see the decorations themselves (pic).

Parti Bumiputera Perkasa Malaysia vice president Mohd Khairul Azam Abdul Aziz, a lawyer himself, and the parents who made the complaints claimed that the New Year lantern decorations were religious. By what stretch of their fertile imagination could they come to this unreasonable conclusion unless they were seriously misinformed and ill advised?

Nevertheless, it is useful for the Cabinet and all right-thinking true Malaysians to try to understand the logic of these individuals. Many would wonder if they were motivated by racism and religious bigotry or the sincere desire to promote national unity and harmony.

If the critics are people who would seek to condemn simple acts of festive celebrations, what can we expect if other groups do the same for other festivals? There would be no national unity but just national enmity and disunity. Is this what we want for ourselves and our country? Could some Malaysians be so parochial, selfish, unMalaysian and uncaring?

They do no credit to their own values or their groups. In fact, they let us down with their narrow and skewed thinking! This is why these critics should be pulled up and



advised on what Malaysia stands for as a multiracial and multireligious country based on our fine Constitution, which promotes peace and prosperity rather than polarisation and enmity.

These critics should clearly explain to the public how and where those who put up the decorations in the school violated the Constitution, failing which they should be penalised for causing so much dissatisfaction nationwide in what is already becoming a more unhappy country!

However, this sad incident can turn out to be a blessing in disguise if we are now more convinced that we really need to have a harmony law. This has been contemplated for so long and often recommended but not followed up swiftly enough.

The Cabinet chaired by Prime

Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has rightly viewed the SMK Pusat Bandar Puchong 1 matter seriously.

We can only hope and pray that the Cabinet, government, Opposition and all patriotic Malaysians will resolve from now on to act swiftly to nip in the bud all racist and bigoted activities, as the Cabinet commendably did this time.

We cannot carry on with these old reckless ways of disunity. We have to be more decisive and purposeful in our determination to fight racism and bigotry by the consistent application of the rule of law.

Adoption of the proposed harmony law would be supported by the vast majority of the rakyat. As true Malaysians, they would no

doubt be against racism and religious bigotry.

In this new decade, we should not give in to any more racism and bigotry. We must do this for our national survival and well-being based on unity, peace, progress and shared prosperity.

We must all congratulate the members of the Cabinet for handling this case well and also encourage them to continue and strongly sustain their efforts to promote greater national unity by fighting racism and bigotry more strongly whenever and wherever these issues arise.

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