Malaysia needs a holistic fight against racism, let’s denounce hypocrisy

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The uncalled racist cum sexist slur made by Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim, the Baling MP in the parliament sitting yesterday (13th July 2020), by telling the Batu Kawan MP, Kasthuri Patto to apply powder because of her dusky skin colour is totally unacceptable and must be reprimanded to prevent the repetition of any likewise incidences.

The gruesome death suffered by George Floyd at the knees of racists is a mirage of a society that silently endorses and brews the ideology of racial supremacism – ‘us’ vs ‘them’. This rhetoric has remorsefully created an imaginary distinction between human beings on the grounds of ethnicity, religious beliefs, language, sexual orientation, gender amongst many others. Sparking an international outcry, the resistance emerged as a clarion call to the world community to demand the chains of discrimination unfettered.

Dismayed Malaysians have poured their solidarity against racism under the ballooning #BlackLivesMatter’s social media campaign. Apart from that, Malaysians have also criticized Lim Kok Wing’s King of Africa billboard for projecting himself as the savior of Africans. Locally, insensitive remark uttered by ex-Miss Universe of Malaysia again the Black protesters received a tirade of backlash from netizens.

One would have thought that Malaysians are now aware of the negative impacts of the ideology of racial supremacism by joining hands to denounce such acts; however, the inter-ethnic solidarity were seemingly ephemeral and applicable to international hostility against minority only. A cursory reading would reveal to us of many devastating incidences in close proximity that is needful of our severe attention. Apart from the uncalled statement by the Baling MP in the parliament, Selangor markets have now adopted a regressive step in prohibiting migrant workers in these premises under the blanket of combating Covid-19.

This outburst was preceded by some xenophobic and race-motivated events in the last few weeks when the government suggested the banning of foreigners and refugees from mosques – a holy place that is supposedly to be free from biasness, prejudices, hatred and social statuses. In addition, sudden cancellation of appointment of advisory council appears to be a decision taken to appease the conservative religious groups.

Pusat KOMAS strongly calls all Malaysians to embrace the common principles of humanity to respect one another in the spirit of equality. Mere sloganeering at the political levels remain hollow shells that does little to undo existing systemic racism.

As Malaysians, let our voices be that power to strike out racism from our midst. From the halls of parliament, from online social media platform and from our private homes.

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