

## Of racist remarks and Umno leaders

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Last week 800 pre-schoolers made the largest 1Malaysia logo using 220,220 twenty sen coins. Here we go again I say to myself. Remember the largest national flag, the largest ketupat, the longest sandwich, the biggest this the largest that. I thought we're through with all that. Obviously not. We're still big in going big so to speak. The only thing is now we're getting small kindergarten kids to do the big thing. What next? Getting babies into the big act? Anyway, on the day The Star newspaper carried that big effort by the kids, it also carried a report on remarks made by Prime Minister Najib Razak, on, well, racist remarks.

Speaking in his capacity as Umno president, Najib was quoted to have said that racist comments from "one or two Umno leaders" should be ignored because the majority of members in the party are not racists.

"Umno is not a racist party. From the beginning, we wanted a multiracial society. Don't listen to one or two leaders talk, that's different. Any party has leaders like them. But look at our policies from Day One", Najib told delegates attending the Gerakan national conference in Kuala Lumpur Sunday Oct 31.

Wise words from a wise man. Something which all of us should pay attention to and take heed. By saying "Day One", Najib was clearly referring to the day Umno was formed in 1946. However the "Umno policies from Day One' would have been "gigantic' and "momentous" had Dato Onn Jaafar's proposal that the party open its doors to non-Malays was accepted. Instead it was thrown out and Dato Onn Jaafar, the father of Umno left the party a frustrated man. Sad. But that's all history now.

Still the policies from Day One were accepted as good if not great. And there are many who still hold on to that belief. A policy to "safeguard Malay interests as well as others and without trampling the rights of non Malays." Something to that effect. But being a Malay party the policy from Day One to the present is a "Malay first policy". Nothing wrong with that. But then perhaps many in Umno, leaders and members are still having the difficulty in drawing the line between being "race based," "racial" and "racist". Even after all this while. Hence we hear of "racist remarks" coming out of Umno. Even so now as Najib himself has admitted.

And the worrying thing is it's not just "one or two leaders" who are making such remarks. Take a listen to speeches made at the Umno general assemblies year in year out and you get the picture. Whatever their reasons might be, one thing's for sure. It's hurting others. Non Malays and non Umno Malays. It's hurting the BN and it's ridiculing Najib's 1Malaysia concept.

So now we are told to ignore" them. That's easy. The rakyat, Malays and non Malays can do that. Push them aside. Can even ostracise them. No problem. But as we're still big in going BIG , then the big question to ask is this: Why are these one or two leaders as Najib puts it, making racist remarks and continue to make racist remarks? That is one big question for Umno to answer.

But the bigger question is if the rakyat are told to ignore them, then what is Umno going to do about it? Ignore them also? Apprehend and reprimand? Sack them? Let them be? Business as usual? Happily ever after? That we want to know. Satu Malaysia mahu tahu (the whole of Malaysia wants to know). No. Make it Satu Dunia. The whole world awaits.