

MCCBCHST MESSAGE
RELIGIOUS HARMONY – BEDROCK FOR NATION’S PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT

The Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) views with great concern the developing controversy surrounding the recent statement of the Pasir Puteh MP Nik Muhammad Zawawi Salleh when he drew a comparison to Christianity, ridiculing Christians by implying that they have ‘distorted’ the Bible on the interpretation of the use of alcohol in the August House of our Parliament.

This is a radical departure in terms of decorum in Parliamentary debates in our country committed to religious harmony among all religious communities in the country. An MP has given himself licence to criticise the tenets of another religion in Parliament, without rebuke expected from the Honourable Speaker of the House.

This is a dangerous precedent and it is totally unacceptable to all peace loving Malaysians of all faiths. Parliament is a place to debate responsible and just governance based on rational arguments based on best practices and in tune with the provisions of the Federal Constitution. If this is the new normal, it will open the door for others to do the same and it may lead to unnecessary arguments that may pit one religion against another, to be used by politicians for their political gain and manoeuvring.

We at MCCCBSHT strongly feel that the MP has crossed the line of bigotry as he offered a stereotyped view of another religion. If the current practise is condoned by the current government, we are indeed going to see an escalation of religious animosity between religious groups manufactured by some politicians to divide and rule.

On the part of the MCCBCHST, we want to categorically state that we are not going to stoop so low and fall into the trap of building animosity by allowing some irresponsible politicians to claim religious and moral superiority by disparaging other religions.

The MCCBCHST stands with the majority of peaceful Malaysians of goodwill and state here that we will never allow certain politicians to dismantle the religious harmony that we have built and upheld over 63 years. The MCCBCHST calls upon the Prime Minister to provide moral leadership by making a statement to forbid politicians who seek to use religion to divide the nation. Bigotry in public discourse should never be normalised.

The Speaker of the House also carries the responsibility on behalf of all Malaysians to disallow politicians who touch on matters of religion other than their own in debates. This issue must be nipped in the bud immediately. If nothing is done that the current government will bear full responsibility of destroying the religious harmony which has served to keep our country in peace and prosperity all these years.

Dated: 1 SEPTEMBER 2020

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Statement issued and endorsed by:

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