

RACISM

is so yesterday

By the "Angler"

Hello, people.

For obvious reasons, I can't tell you my name. What I can say is that I am 15 years old, in Form 3 and a part of our flawed educational system.

As a student, I face problems any other student would. Too much homework, overly-strict teachers, and living up to parents' expectations (*ai caramba!**) are all daily problems. And then, there is also racism.

It's completely standard for me, really. Nearly everyone in my school is a racist, and those that aren't racists to begin with but are friends with racists end up that way themselves as an attempt to be accepted. If you want proof, just head on over to my school for a day. You will be treated to underage racism at its finest.

During recess, in the canteen, the students will sit together based on their race. In class, the students will sit next to those only of their own race, and most would rather sit alone than with someone of another race.

Even the teachers are no different. In the lounge, they will mingle and joke around almost always with colleagues of the same race, talking to those of another only on official school business. Imagine, the very people who are supposed to be teaching your children, not merely subjects, but also moral values, practise something so medieval.

And yet, the problem is ignored.

Branded as a "sensitive issue", racism is something no one is allowed to talk openly about, about what's really going on, while school officials and higher-ups yap on about how strong inter-racial unity is here under 1 Malaysia. And all the while, the problem swells, like a shadow hanging over us, growing by the day, swallowing more and more people into its ranks.

My own best friend, whom I also cannot name, is a racist of a completely different level. You should hear him going on about how much he hates Malays and Indians, because to him all Indians are dirty and all Malays are lazy. A bit hypocritical, seeing as I'm one. His excuse is that seeing as I'm exactly that, a mix of both, I am therefore neither and so he does not hate me. There is no hope for some.

But for those with hope, for those with a chance, we must spread a message to them. The message that there is no importance in one's race whatsoever. In fact, to me, there is no such thing as race at all, there are only people. Take for example, a certain fish from Lake Malawi in Africa. It exists in multiple colour forms, in multiple different geological locations, they can all show natural interaction between one another. That's kind of a weird example, but I think it's a precise one. That's what we must be like, existing in multiple-colour variations, spread out over different geological locations, and yet, still showing normal interactions between one another because deep down, past all the petty differences, we are all the same, we are all people.

To quote the back of my favourite t-shirt, "One People, One Nation."

* *Spanish for aiyoh-aiyoh!*