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Black wedding rejected in white church

WASHINGTON: A Mississippi couple were shocked when the pastor at the church they attended told them the wedding they had planned for July 20 could not be held there because they are black, ABC television reported on Saturday.

Pastor Stan Weatherford, who is white, told the network that some of the white congregation so virulently opposed the wedding of Charles and Te'Andrea Wilson who are black, that they threatened to have him fired.

Weatherford who said there had never been a wedding for blacks at the First Baptist Church in Crystal Springs, Mississippi, since it was opened in 1883, offered to wed the Wilsons down the road

at a mostly black church.

"My nine-year-old was going to the church with us. How would you say to your nine-year-old daughter, 'We cannot get married here because, guess what sweetie, we're black,'" Charles Wilson told ABC's affiliate WAPT-TV.

The bad news forced the couple to move their wedding ceremony to another church where it was held July 21.

Locals voiced shock at the pastor's move.

"What would Jesus have done? He would have married them, without a doubt, because it's the right thing to do. We're all God's children," said local resident Theresa Norwood, 48. - AFP

1 Malaysia logo for N-Day



Artwork used by some quarters are merely supplementary display material, not the official logo'

- Rais Yatim

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PETALING JAYA: The standard iMalaysia symbol will be used as the 55th National Day celebrations' logo, Datuk Seri Rais Yatim announced yesterday.

Commenting in the wake of an outcry over a logo unveiled a week ago, the information, communications and culture minister said in a tweet yesterday that the standard iMalaysia logo would be used for Merdeka and Malaysia Day celebrations.

"To quell some misunderstanding we only hv iMalaydia (sic) as logo for Merdeka n Hari Msia. There will be several promo highlights till the big day," Rais said on his official twitter handle @drraisyatim.

He said in a statement later that artwork used by some quarters were merely supplementary display material, and not the



The logo unveiled earlier which came under fire from netizens.

official logo.

"There would be other promotional materials to be unveiled in the run-up to Merdeka Day on Aug 31 and Malaysia Day on Sept 16," he said.

On Saturday, Rais had in a press interview defended the logo unveiled earlier, saying it was not plagiarised and was a manifestation of the iMalaysia spirit by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Rais said the logo and its message this year did not vary far from previous years and alleged that its detractors were merely out

for cheap publicity.

It was reported that the government had forsook the traditional Merdeka logo designing competition this year and left the task to the Information Department.

Apparently unimpressed with the resulting logo, local design company Empayar Kukubesi launched an online competition through Facebook, to get people to come up with an alternative design.

Its manager Bella Juhari said the contest which started last Monday has since attracted more than 400 entries.

"The winning designs will be turned into t-shirts and put on sale," said Bella, adding that despite Rais' contention that the standard iMalaysia symbol would be used, the contest will go on with tomorrow being the deadline for all entries.

Rais in his statement stressed that the theme for the celebrations - 55 Tahun Merdeka Janji Ditepati - would remain unchanged.

The lyrics for the theme song - incidentally penned by Rais himself - has also come under heavy criticism from netizens who described it as being a political campaign by the Barisan Nasional (BN) government.

This was because the song and theme for this year's celebrations, is the same as the BN election campaign slogan.

Checks by theSun showed that

the official video for the 3,38-minute song, has been uploaded and shared on at least 12 different YouTube accounts since July 23.

As at press time, at least four uploads of the video recorded a 98% 'dislike' status from its total number of views.

Comments posted were also largely negative, especially over the line "Janji sudah ditepati; Kini masa balas budi" (Promises have been fulfilled; Now is time to return the favour).

Malaysians are not beholden to the government whose role is to serve the people without expecting

any returns, some commented, while others said the government appears to be insincere by asking the people to return its favours.

The inclusion of some BN-led initiatives, known by their acronyms such as 'TRiM' (Tuisyen Rakyat iMalaysia) and 'BRiM' (Bantuan Rakyat iMalaysia), also drew brickbats from YouTube viewers who said the theme song should not be used as a campaign tool.

Similar sentiments were also voiced across various blogs and social networking sites.



MILLION-DOLLAR ROBOT ... Engineer Mitsugoro Kurata (centre) walks in front of Japanese electronics company Suidobashi Heavy Industry's newly unveiled robot 'Kuratas' at the Wonder Festival in Chiba, suburban Tokyo yesterday. The robot, which will go on sale with a price tag of US\$1 million (RM3.2 million), measures four metres in height, weighs four tonnes and has four wheeled legs that can either be controlled remotely through the 3G network or by a human seated within the cockpit.

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