UM vegetarians left in the lurch

INDIAN students of Universiti Malaya were fortunate to be able to conveniently obtain vegetarian food at the Perdana Siswa Complex canteen for almost a year at affordable prices. The variety of food, though not lavish, was sufficient. Students were certain that what they consumed was vegetarian. However, with the new management of the canteen, the only Indian stall on campus that catered vegetarian food has disappeared, and many Indian students are left in the lurch.

To say that anyone can prepare vegetarian food is a misconception. Any Indian with a basic knowledge of Hinduism will know that vegetarianism is an essential part of the religion and Indian culture and vegetarians observe it as a matter of religious obligation. Therefore it remains to this day a cardinal ethic of Hinduism and Hindu philosophy. As there are many Indian students on campus who are strict vegetarians, they will find it difficult to compromise on this issue. The authorities should not have overlooked this fact as it is a matter of respect and sensitivity to religious beliefs.

What I cannot understand is that the best of Iranian food is, however, readily available not only at the Perdana Siswa canteen but at other canteens too. It is disappointing to note that Indian students are not accorded the same attention, considering that they have been an integral part of the campus since its earliest days.

Was this development an unintentional mistake or a wilful omission? I hope the authorities will look into this matter quickly as it is one that can be rectified. It is hoped also that in the future, due recognition is given to matters such as this.

Indian Student
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