PETALING JAYA: A local television station's Ramadan public service announcements (PSA) have sparked outrage among the online community for its allegedly racist content.
The three ads by 8TV were widely circulated in social networking sites by users who said the announcements left a bad taste in the mouth.

An hour after sending out a tweet telling people to chill and not over-analyse the ads, Media Prima Berhad chief operating officer Ahmad Izham Omar, which owns 8TV, sent out another tweet saying it was withdrawing the PSA.

Ok guys. We're pulling out the ads. Thank you very much for your concern, he said.

A Facebook user Shamyl Othman said the ads were insulting to both non-Muslims and Muslims.

Not only are they in bad taste, they trivialise the significance of Ramadan, he said.

All three ads, which run for 30 seconds each, show the same Chinese girl acting inappropriately, with three different scenarios, at a Ramadan bazaar.

The first PSA shows the girl shouting at one stall owner and asking another for a discount.

The second PSA shows the same girl eating greedily in front of the stall, with Muslim customers watching her.

The third PSA shows the girl wearing a sleeveless blouse, with her shoulders and arm-pits pixelated.

All the scenes are then followed by messages urging viewers to not be loud and obnoxious; not be greedy nor eat in public; and not wear revealing clothes.

The girl then acts appropriately in the next scenes.

All three ads end with 8TV presenters telling its viewers not to get carried away and understand the significance of Ramadan, before wishing them Selamat Berpuasa (Happy Fasting).

Facebook user Azrul Mohd Khalib also condemned the advertisements and said that fasting during Ramadan was about discipline, empathy and solidarity. It is not about imposing your will on others, he said.

On its Facebook fanpage, 8TV apologised for any uneasiness caused.