

April 16 issue of Time magazine banned

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By Farush Khan
and Tony Emmanuel

news@nstp.com.my

BENTONG, Sat. — The Government will not tolerate any publication which dishonours Islam with caricatures of Prophet and the like, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

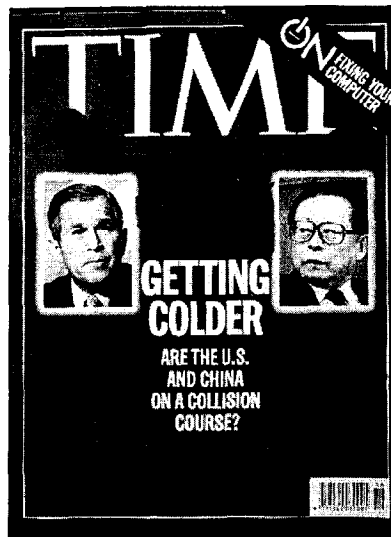
Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, said such books or magazines would not be allowed to be distributed here as they dishonoured (*menghina*) Islam.

He was speaking after opening the Bentong Umno division delegates' conference.

He was commenting on the latest issue of *Time* magazine which had carried a caricature of the Prophet meeting with Jibrail in receiving God's *wahyu* or revelation.

"The message here is that they should not do such a thing. If they do it, the Ministry will not allow the distribution of their publication."

Asked how the latest issue of



BANNED ... The front cover of the Time magazine concerned.

Time had been distributed, Abdullah said: "Normally, all publications are reviewed. I don't know how it was overlooked."

Asked on the form of action that would be considered against *Time*,

he said no further action would be taken.

On whether the Ministry will send a protest note to the magazine, he said the withdrawal of the issue was already a form of protest.

Opening the delegates' conference which was attended by some 1,000 party members, Abdullah called on Umno members to ensure those elected to various posts were capable and could deliver the goods.

Also present were party secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob and Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob, who is also Bentong Umno division chief who was returned to the post uncontested.

Meanwhile, the Home Ministry has banned the sale and distribution of the April 16 issue of *Time* magazine as a section to the article, entitled *Jerusalem As Jesus Saw It*, was found to be offensive to Islam and Muslims.

Following the ban, which came into force on Friday, book and magazine distributors ordered an immediate recall of the magazine from

shelves.

Attempts to obtain the magazine from reputed bookstores proved futile as most retailers cited the ban.

However, certain book traders and newspaper outlets were selling the magazines "under the counter".

"Since news of the offensive article was published on Friday, readers have been asking for the copy," one trader said. "It's odd that a ban is being imposed as subscribers have already obtained their copies."

The Ministry's printing and publication division ordered a review of the magazine following a complaint forwarded by Umno's complaints and service bureau Tanjung division chairman Karim Majid.

The complaint was based on a caricature and its caption which read "A Meccan merchant named Muhammad receives a message from the archangel Gabriel that he is God's new Prophet".

In Islam, depiction of the image of Prophet Muhammad and angels is forbidden.

Time is reputed to be Asia's largest English magazine.