

09/02/2003

Media coverage of Chinese in vice unfair, says ambassador

Lim Chee Wei

THE recent focus on the number of women from China involved in immoral activities has prompted a reaction from the Chinese Embassy.

In an interview with Sin Chew Daily on Tuesday, China's Ambassador to Malaysia Hu Zhenyue criticised the Malaysian media for being unfair when it came to handling news on Chinese who were detained for alleged involvement in prostitution.

"Are Malaysians totally blameless in such cases? It was the local people who cheated and tricked those Chinese women to Malaysia, and it was the local people who made a fortune out of the women's misery."

The Chinese Embassy, Hu added, is maintaining good ties with local police and the Immigration Department to tackle the problem.

"General election early next year?" is the issue a commentary in Sin Chew Daily examined on Thursday.

Citing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's comment in an interview with Reuters that the general election would only be held after his retirement, the commentary said it is unlikely the event would take place this year.

Some, said the commentary, believed this latest revelation from Dr Mahathir has reduced the likelihood of a general election this year, although it is still possible for Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to call for the election in December.

"If Abdullah opts to hold the general election as soon as he takes over the leadership, it will undoubtedly signify his authority. However, being the new Prime Minister, he still needs some time to carry out certain adjustments and to establish his stature."

The Chinese Press also highlighted the public outcry over a TV advertisement aired recently on national TV.

The advertisement was sponsored by Perodua, the maker of the second national car.

Reported in Oriental Daily on Friday, Teh Eng Hin, chief of the Federation of Chinese Associations Malaysia Youth Section, slammed Perodua for producing a "racially-insensitive" TV advertisement.

"The substance of the advertisement seems to suggest Chinese are pretentious and like to show off."

Teh advised Perodua to keep the advertisement off the air otherwise his movement will call for support from other Chinese-based youth movements to take necessary action to defend the pride of the Chinese community.

The TV advertisement was in two segments. One showed three Chinese women trying to outshine each other with their jewellery, while the other showed a Chinese couple decorating their house for the arrival of a "Datuk", but offering no hospitality to a poor relative.

Penang DAP political researcher Jad Ryn also voiced his protest over the same TV advertisement.

Reported in Nanyang Siang Pau, Jad Ryn said Penang DAP would lodge a police report and submit a memorandum of protest to the Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.