

**Perkasa gives gov't 2 weeks over Christian issue**  
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Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein must probe the alleged conspiracy to turn the country into a Christian state and issue a public statement in two weeks' time, demanded Malay rights group Pertubuhan Pribumi Perkasa Malaysia (Perkasa).

In issuing the warning, the group's president Ibrahim Ali warned of threats to national security if the authorities delayed investigations into the matter.

He said this in response to reports in blogs and by Malay language daily, Utusan Malaysia, accusing DAP of plotting with pastors to make Christianity the country's official religion and so that a Christian can become prime minister.

"If its true, their statement touched on religion and challenged the position of Islam as the country's official religion," said Ibrahim.

He said 14 police reports have been lodged on the matter, and the group intends to lodge another tomorrow.

"We view this seriously as it involves religion and its is intended to provoke and threaten national security," Ibrahim told reporters at a press conference in Kampung Baru, Kuala Lumpur.

**'Ministry shouldn't wait for investigations'**

"If its true, the security personnel should not wait long (until) the investigation process is complete and wait for the Attorney-General's Chambers to consider the legal aspects (before taking action). It might take too long and this will cause uneasiness.

"This is why the Home Ministry must make a public statement, if the gathering took place and if a proposal to inaugurate Christianity as the official religion, whether it's opposed to the Sedition Act," said Ibrahim.

He claims that according to information gathered by Perkasa, the meeting did take place and DAP representatives participated in it.

jeff ooi lodge police report against utusan 080511 1Blog postings cited in the Utusan report placed Jelutong DAP parliamentarian Jeff Ooi (right) as the said representative who allegedly attended the meeting and joined in the prayers with pastors, who were reportedly attending a meeting at the Catholic Christian Centre in Penang last week.

Ooi today denied the allegations and lodged a police report against Utusan and one of the bloggers who had spread the rumour, calling the reports "malicious".

"It is clear that this reporting is baseless and highly irresponsible ... Furthermore, this report comes after the National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF), one of the organisers of the above meeting, having refuted the claims of those bloggers and the same was carried on online media," said Ooi.

The Christian groups that organised the event has also denied the allegations, and Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, Murphy Nicholas Pakiam has called the reports "irresponsible, baseless and provocative", calling for an investigation to determine the source of these "insidious, provocative and malicious lies".

**'We don't care about consequences'**

Ibrahim continued, "Prevention is better than cure... we want the government to be strict. This is not a

political issue, don't be pleasing (voters) just because it will affect your chances at the ballot box," he urged government leaders.

"We don't want to play with fire, but when there is such a revelation the cops must investigate its authenticity," he said.

If investigation reveal that the blogger had made false allegations, stern measures must be taken against that person, added Ibrahim.

"We can't let go of the issue of national security... (and) when Islam is insulted and we speak up, we are accused of being racist.

"But we will not be quiet, we in Perkasa are not apologetic. We don't care about the consequences, we only care about national security," he said.

Earlier today, Perkasa's Malacca chapter (right) lodged a report over the matter together with another NGO.

Speaking to reporters after lodging his complaint with the Melaka Tengah police station, Malacca Perkasa chief Abd Rahim Othman said if the allegation were true, the conspiracy is an incitement to hatred against the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong and the Malay rulers as the heads of Islam in the country.

"We are concerned that this would lead to chaos and instability in this multicultural society. As the head (of Malacca) Perkasa, I lodged this report to urge the authorities to investigate what really occurred.

"If there is proof, it is an offence under the Sedition Act, and I hope legal action will be taken against those involved," said Abd Rahim.

### **Dragging in Interlok**

On another issue, the right-wing Malay rights movement also reprimanded Penang's decision to remove the controversial literature textbook 'Interlok' from public display in libraries.

Ibrahim called the move "provocation" as the government had taken measures to "edit and amended" passages in the novel that were considered offensive to the Indian community.

"It's a Malay language book. (We are) of the Malay race. I felt (insulted)," he said, adding that it was an insult to national laureate and author Abdullah Hussain who penned the novel.

Last week, the Penang government said that Interlok will be not be publicly displayed in the state's libraries, as a response to the continued unhappiness amongst the Indian community over the book.

Interlok is a compulsory reading for Bahasa Malaysia literature in the secondary school syllabus in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya as well as Negri Sembilan.

The novel was admonished in particular for using terms considered derogatory to the Indian community and for its skewed depictions of ethnic communities post-Merdeka.

Ibrahim said that Penang's move was insulting as the government had already compromised on the book by giving in to public pressure to make amendments.

### **'Gov't jumped the gun'**

Meanwhile human rights NGO Perstuan Promosi Hak Asasi Manusia (Proham) slammed Utusan's "unprofessional" behaviour "betraying the basic principles of responsible journalism" adding that the daily may be guilty of "orchestrating racial and religious conflict".

Proham also ticked the federal authorities off for taking Utusan's report at face value "as fact" even before investigating the matter.

Hamdan Adnan, Proham Malaysia's deputy chairperson said in a statement that from investigations, they conclude that the reports are baseless.

"From investigation of various media reports, Proham is now able to conclude that the Utusan Malaysia headlines 'Kristian agama rasmi?' and 'Amaran Polis' are based on an unverified blog article, without any reference to the concerned parties mentioned.

"The matter at hand is highly sensitive and the daily can be found to be guilty of orchestrating racial and religious conflict," said Hamdan.

He said Utusan was guilty of misleading its Malay and Muslim readers and can be seen as undermining Prime Minister Najib Razak's 1Malaysia.

He lamented that the home minister and deputy inspector of police had issued caution statements without having completed investigations.

"(They) have assumed the reporting in Utusan as fact and have issued caution statements. They have also failed to caution Utusan Malaysia in its coverage of this news," said Hamdan.

The NGO reminded the authorities to carry out their duties "without fear and favour" and called for the home minister to "investigate Utusan Malaysia and the two blogs that have posted the said article".

"Proham calls on the ministry to take appropriate action if what was published is unfounded."