

Christian group airs grouses over Utusan report to PM
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today heard complaints from Christian leaders over Utusan Malaysia's "irresponsible reporting" by claiming there is a conspiracy to turn Malaysia into a Christian state.

We only said we are very disturbed and unhappy... (over the) irresponsible, potential riot-type seditious words (which) shouldn't be published in the mainstream media, or any media for that matter," said Bishop Ng Moon Hing of the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM).

Ng (right) was speaking to reporters after a 45-minute closed-door meeting with the prime minister in Putrajaya.

He said it was a fruitful meeting as this was the first time the group had been engaged in this way.

"The prime minister stressed moderation, and I think all of us believe in the same," he said. There is no room for "extremism", added Ng.

Police investigation assured

The meeting, which is said have been arranged two weeks ago, was chaired by Najib, who was accompanied by ministers in the Prime Minister's Department Idris Jala and Koh Tsu Koon.

Ng said the allegations in the Utusan news report and the blogs were "all lies", and Najib had given his assurance that the police were investigating the matter. We deny all these things.

"The Christian community and all other communities respect the position of Islam. We have never challenged the position of Islam.

"We want our own space to worship our God, that's all. Everybody wants the freedom to worship their God," said Ng.

"We have no reason to usurp anything or challenge anybody. I don't think it's a right thing to do and no Christian will do such a thing."

Besides Ng, three other representatives from CFM, namely, Reverend Eu Hong Seng, Bishop Antony Selvanayagam and Thomas Sen, were present.

'A good sign'

Christians attend a Sunday service inside a church in Petaling Jaya Also at the meeting were Kuala Lumpur Catholic Archbishop Murphy Pakiam, Sabah Council of Churches president Albert Voon and Sarawak Churches Association president Bolly Lapok.

"We have informed the prime minister and already made our stand in the media, that any malicious and seditious thing should not be condoned. If it is condoned some action must be taken," said Ng.

Ng said they had also discussed issues and problems pertaining to mission schools, cemeteries and churches, as well as the "umpteens" memoranda that had been submitted in the past.

"It's a good sign the prime minister is beginning to engage. The prime minister is the prime minister of all and the whole country - so he must engage with all.

"We even offered our help and asked how Christians can contribute to develop the country together. We are interested in peace, harmony and we are non-partisan in politics," said Ng.

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