

## **'Don't use ISA or sedition laws against Ibrahim Ali'**

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PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim does not support calls for sedition laws nor the Internal Security Act be used against Ibrahim Ali, the leader of Malay right-wing group Perkasa.

Anwar said that Malaysians must instead collectively decide whether they were willing to condone the incitement of religious or racial hatred by Perkasa and other right-wing groups.

"People who are angry with Ibrahim asked for him to be charged with sedition or ISA. I don't," he said in an exclusive interview with Malaysiakini yesterday.

As a matter of principle, I don't support ISA or the Sedition Act and therefore I do not condone the use of these (laws), even as a temporary measure.

"(But) should a civilised country, after half a century of independence, condone these sorts of sentiments?"

Ibrahim, who is also Pasir Mas parliamentarian, had come under fire for calling for a 'crusade' and 'jihad' (holy war) against Christians, who were accused of trying to undermine Islam's position in Malaysia.

His remarks last Saturday at a 1Malaysia event was in response to a heavily-refuted Utusan Malaysia's report that a group of church leaders had taken an oath to make Christianity the country's official religion and to install a Christian prime minister.

### **'Ibrahim singing gov't tune'**

Both the opposition Pakatan Rakyat and some BN leaders have called for Ibrahim to be punished.

However, Anwar said that while Ibrahim could be investigated under laws other than ISA or the Sedition Act, he believed that no action would be taken against the vocal MP because such incitement was condoned by the ruling regime.

"There are laws to investigate (Ibrahim), but how do you investigate when you know it is being promoted and supported by the ruling establishment?" he asked.

On Tuesday, de facto law minister Nazri Abdul Aziz told Malaysiakini that it would be unfair to take action against Ibrahim as he is only one of many people who utter seditious comments lately.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein also skirted the issue, dismissing the Independent MP's views as not representative of the majority of Malays and Muslims in Malaysia.

### **Ibrahim: I said 'jihad' for shock value**

Meanwhile, in a statement late last night, Ibrahim sought to clarify that he was using the word 'jihad' to shock the Muslims into realising that Islam was being ridiculed.

"Jihad does not only mean perang salib (crusade), it does not mean the killing of Christians and Muslims, (but it) includes acts of prevention (by) using one's hands, mouth, writing and other means.

"Everyone lost their cool (in response to Saturday's speech) but they don't realise what they do sometimes also demean Islam, and when this happens no one is reprimanded," he said.

Ibrahim lamented that the only media who gets criticised all the time is Utusan, and that new media, be it

news portals, blogs, Facebook pages or Twitter users, get away scot-free by posting insulting articles and photos that insult the religion.

"I used the word 'jihad' to jolt people into realising (that Islam is being maligned)," he said.

### **'Naive' to expect action against Utusan**

Asked to comment on the Home Ministry's caution letter against Utusan, Anwar said that it would be "naive" to believe that action would be meted out against the Umno-owned newspaper.

Citing his experience as a Umno deputy president, he claimed that the "it is an unwritten law of the country" that Utusan gets its instructions straight from the party's boss.

"Clearly (it is) naive to assume that Umno will take action against their own party newspaper which functions under the direction of the president of the party, who happens to be the prime minister of the country.

"I'm not ... fatalistic or dismissive (about the matter). I'm saying that this must be made known. (Prime Minister) Najib (Abdul Razak) can go on saying 'Oh, Utusan - tough!' but I know Utusan and how it is run," he said.

The Home Ministry had last week issued a caution letter against Utusan for publishing the report on the alleged Christian conspiracy but this was deemed by its detractors as too lenient.