

Facebook furore: USM student on police bail

MalaysiaKini.com

January 16, 2012

Susan Loone

The university student detained yesterday for allegedly threatening to bomb the helicopter carrying Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to Nibong Tebal has been released by police so that he can sit his examinations.

Penang chief police officer Ayub Yaacob (right) said he wanted to give the USM civil engineering student the opportunity to do so, as he is young and a future talent.

The student was released last night on police bail but will have to report back in a month, to assist a probe over his Facebook posting which stated: 'najib is coming to our campus.....Lets bomb his helicopter'.

Three police reports have been lodged against him, and he is being investigated for criminal intimidation under Section 506 of the Penal Code.

Ayub said he had met the youth and his father, who is a member of a uniformed group, and had advised the student to be cautious in his actions.

"I talked to him personally from 9-11.30pm last night. He is aware and has admitted to his mistakes. He said he did not mean what he said in his (posting)," Ayub told a press conference in Penang.

"He is a fourth year student in engineering, he is not in (Year) 6 or Form 1. Of course, we take it seriously ... There is nothing political about this. It is a police case, so let us handle it."

The student, who was arrested on campus on yesterday afternoon, was taken to the district police headquarters in Patani Road.

Ayub warned the public to be careful and not to be thoughtless in exercising freedom of speech.

"Political differences have nothing to do with national safety, Let's use politics to develop the country. Let us all be champions because we fight for the good of the country," he added.

'Statement raised public concerns'

Ayub said the student's statement on his Facebook page has raised public concerns as evident in several blogs condemning his action.

Ayub added that his "astonishing" action prompted police to probe the matter as it was very serious and threatening.

Police were investigating the motive and purpose of the youth's action and whether it was related to incitement, the state police chief said.

He stressed that the police were currently probing his background, networking circles and whether the youth was involved with undesirable elements.

"Do not think we are out to restrict freedom of speech but there are limits to everything... people must use their wisdom and senses," he said.

"His statement makes people angry. What if it happens to us, to our family or our parents? What if one

day we read on Facebook that someone wants to hurt our father? We will surely act," he added.

"Najib is not only a prime minister, but a family man, how can you make a joke out of this? Don't play the fool. If you are in other countries, you may face serious action and may be arrested for terrorism," he stressed.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malysiakini.com/news/186713>