

**Xenophon should reject NST's apology**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**May 04, 2012**  
**By Bob Teoh**

COMMENT There are rare instances when an apology should not be accepted. The New Straits Times' (NST) public apology to Australian independent senator Nicholas Xenophon is one such occasion.

nick xenophon 290412 Adding insult to his injury, a similar article appeared in the Malay language daily, Utusan Malaysia, quoting the same doctored speech from Xenophon (right), describing him as an anti-Islam politician as well as a staunch supporter of same-sex marriage. Utusan has yet to apologise. Both papers are owned by Umno, the main party in the ruling coalition.

NST did not apologise at the earliest opportunity. It only did so after it was hauled up by Australia's High Commissioner to Malaysia yesterday.

In the context of the Asian culture of shame, it becomes extremely difficult to accept an apology when one becomes an object of 'biadap' (barbaric, uncivilised) and 'hina' (scurrilous) attacks unless it is accompanied by genuine remorse. There was none forthcoming from NST.

More than that, the attack on the senator is nothing short of criminal defamation.

NST fails to meet the ingredients of a genuine apology. It is insincere and failed to understand the gravity of its transgressions nor showed appropriate remorse.

Instead, NST is seeking to deceive its readers that it was a "gross error." In truth, it was never an error. NST went out of its way to vilify the visiting senator by barbaric means.

NST acknowledged its article contained, amongst others, the following statement:

1. In a speech made in the Australian Parliament on 17.11.2009, Mr Xenophon was critical of Islam and came out openly in support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issue.
2. Mr Xenophon is reported to have said in his speech that "What we are seeing is a worldwide pattern of abuse and criminality. On the body of evidence, this is not happening by accident; it is happening by design. Islam is not a religious organisation. It is a criminal organisation that hides behind its so-called religious beliefs."
3. Mr Xenophon therefore questioned whether Islam deserved any support.

We hereby confirm that we have made a grave error in publishing the statements in the article. We accept that in his speech in the Australian Parliament referred to in the article, Mr Xenophon did not use the word "Islam" and neither did he assert that Islam is not a religious organisation but a criminal organisation hiding behind its religious belief.

#### Speech criticising Scientology

What NST did not admit was that Xenophon had made a speech criticising Scientology, but references to that belief was diabolically replaced by NST with the word "Islam". This puts the senator's life at risk from extremist elements as he was visiting Malaysia.

Both NST and Utusan are guilty of incendiary hate speech by using the race and religion card. They should not be allowed to get away with an empty apology for their irresponsible and highly dangerous act. Xenophon should reject the apology and sue. It is Umno which should apologise to both the senator and the papers' readers for the deception and gross indecency.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source: <http://www.malysiakini.com/news/196913>