

DAP: Forget Facebook, shut down BTN instead
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Instead of shutting down Facebook to preserve racial harmony, the government should look at abolishing Biro Tata Negara (BTN) said Senai assemblyperson Wong Shu Qi.

"The ridiculous suggestion to block Facebook proposed by Ahmad Shabery Cheek, Communication and Multimedia Minister, allegedly to promote harmony, has once again put Malaysia in the world news headlines for the wrong reason.

"If the government is serious about preventing hate speech and instead creating a harmonious multicultural society, the authorities should consider abolishing the BTN instead of blocking Facebook." she said in a statement today.

Shabery (right) struck a raw nerve on both sides of the political divide this week when he announced that his ministry would study if the popular social networking site should be blocked.

He cited the case of a Facebook user posting comments that he deemed were insulting the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Wong added that BTN is the root in racial bigotry especially by spreading racist elements through their training and courses conducted for students and civil servants.

"BTN, a government agency that is supposed to promote national unity but has been turned into a brainwashing unit to espouse racial supremacy as well as to support Umno and BN," she said.

She also said that by dissolving BTN the idea of a tolerant Malaysia would be achievable .

"Dissolve the BTN immediately to achieve a long-term aim of creating a moderate Malaysia where there will be no hatred among the people on the basis of race, religion, gender or class."

'BTN waste of funds'

Wong further emphasised that BTN was a waste of public funds citing how this year RM 64.8 million was allocated to it compared to the RM 86 million allocated for the Parliament.

"The small difference (in the two allocations) means Umno-BN prefers to promote racism than to respect the Parliament as the highest decision-making body in the country," said the DAP assemblyperson (left).

Various parties have been increasingly vocal about Facebook users's comments that are claimed to be insensitive.

In one case Sports and Youth Minister questioned why a youth Kelvin Yip wasn't probed for his offensive Facebook complaint about loud prayers from a nearby mosque.

Yesterday, the police launched a sedition probe against a 17-year-old schoolboy for clicking 'like' on a pro-Israel Facebook page.

Shabery however backpedalled today admitting that to control Facebook users was "impossible" and denied the government had wanted it banned.

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