

Perkasa sues minister for calling it 'racist'

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Malay rights NGO, Pertubuhan Pribumi Perkasa Negara (Perkasa), has filed a defamation suit against Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Joseph Kurup for labelling the group as 'racist and chauvinist'.

Perkasa - led by its chief, Ibrahim Ali - claimed that Kurup had repeated his statement again yesterday at Sunway in Petaling Jaya.

Perkasa filed their suit at the Kuala Lumpur High Court registry this morning (above).

Perkasa's statement of claim alleged that Kurup meant to say that the organisation was extremist and that it used religion to provoke violence. As such, it should not be allowed to exist in the country.

They further claimed the words used by Kurup (right) implied that Perkasa was against the values enshrined by the country's formation and that it had caused fear as well as disunity amongst the people.

Perkasa is seeking an injunction against the minister to bar him from repeating the words as well as general, aggravated damages and exemplary damages.

Kurup was alleged to have used the defamatory words in a media statement on Christmas Eve last year. Perkasa has claimed similar statements were made by him during a convention in Petaling Jaya yesterday.

Both statements were part of the suit filed today by Perkasa.

Letter of demand to G25

At a press conference after filing the suit, Ibrahim said they were suing Kurup as he was picking on the NGO.

"As Perkasa president, I have come to court to prove these allegations against us false.

"We cannot take these accusations that have been made against us especially by a cabinet minister without any evidence," he said.

Kurup, who is in charge of unity and race relations, had previously also called on the Attorney-General's Chambers to reopen the case on Ibrahim's threat to burn Bibles.

Ibrahim also said that Perkasa's lawyer had sent a letter of demand to Noor Farida

Ariffin (left), a former diplomat who is spokesperson for an eminent group of concerned Malays popularly dubbed the 'G25' (Group of 25).

He alleged that she had used derogatory terms against his group in her media statements while representing G25.

“We have already sent a letter of demand to Noor Farida, as the leader of G25, asking for a retraction of her statements and an apology. She has yet to respond,” said Ibrahim.

The G25 gained prominence with an open letter to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak early last month urging him to show leadership in the wake of increasingly belligerent voices from right-wing groups such as Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (Isma) and Perkasa.

Ibrahim also said that Perkasa was not 'chauvinist, extremist or racist' but was being made use of.

“Everybody who is looking for political mileage uses Perkasa as a punching bag. When they attack Perkasa, they gain more support,” Ibrahim said.

Kurup responds

Meanwhile, in response to Perkasa's suit, Kurup said he 'must have done something right'.

"I must have done something right for Ibrahim Ali to sue me. I will do whatever is necessary to defend Malaysia's unity and I am prepared to face Ibrahim Ali or anybody else in our courts.

"Truth and justice will always prevail," said the minister in a statement.

“As minister overseeing national unity, I made a stand to not tolerate racial and religious bigotries that are tearing the fabric of this harmonious society.

"It is both my responsibility and mission to see such incidents of extremism nullified," he added.