

'Harakah' joins Home Ministry hit-list
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The editor of PAS organ Harakah was summoned to a meeting with the Home Ministry yesterday, making it the third publication to make it into the ministry's 'bad books' in recent weeks.

However, according to the ministry's information portal iKDN, the meeting did not zero in on specific articles. Rather, it was to "remind them of their roles and responsibilities as a publisher".

NONE "The intention of meeting was for the ministry to advise the publisher to follow the guidelines outlined in the permit," the website said.

"Among these is for the publisher to provide eight copies of each issue to the ministry as soon as it is printed."

The meeting was chaired by deputy secretary-general Abdul Rahim Mohd Tadzi (pictured) and was attended by the publications and al-Quran text controls division secretary Zaitun Ab Samad and Harakah editor Taufek Yahya.

The report claimed it was not the ministry's intention to complicate matters, but said it has responsibility to act if guidelines are not adhered to.

Contacted today, Taufek said Harakah respects that the Home Ministry has a role to play but urged the ministry to respect the publisher in turn.

NONE "The ministry should respect Harakah's role as an opposition organ and as a source of alternative news," he said.

He said the ministry had urged Harakah to be "more careful" while reporting "sensitive issues" like the sports betting licence, Jemaah Islamiah and the Federal Land Development Authority.

He said the ministry had also tried to link Harakah reports to national security.

"By right, the ministry should know how to differentiate between national security issues and issues that undermine the ruling coalition. They are two different issues completely.

"The mainstream media reports negatively on Pakatan Rakyat as well as issues that go against the Pakatan-led governments, but this is not considered a security threat. The ministry should consider having a look at that too."

The Malay-rights NGO Perkasa's tabloid Suara Perkasa and PKR mouthpiece Suara Keadilan were both called up by the ministry recently for publishing articles deemed inappropriate.

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