

**Harakah perplexed over 'show-cause letter' report  
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Harakah's acting chief editor Taufek Yahya said the fortnightly owned by PAS was trying to obtain an explanation from Home Ministry officials before deciding on its next course of action to a report that it has been issued with a show cause letter.

"There is no show cause letter. So how are we suppose to respond?" Taufek asked when contacted by Malaysiakini.

Berita Harian reported today that the Home Ministry yesterday issued a show cause letter to Harakah for its purported failure to submit eight copies of its fortnightly publication for ministry scrutiny.

harakah edisi julai 2009The report said this was part of Harakah's publishing permit requirement. It adds that Harakah was given seven days to respond to the show cause letter.

Home Ministry secretary-general Mahmood Adam was quoted by Berita Harian as warning Harakah that failure to comply would result in complications when it sought the renewal of its publishing permit.

The show cause letter was reportedly to have been handed to Taufek who represented Harakah in the meeting with ministry's officials on Monday.

Contacted today, Taufek expressed regret over Mahmood's statement, saying it was untrue.

"It is not true that we did not deliver copies to the Home Ministry... we were only late in delivering," he said adding the matter pertaining to its permit was never brought up during his meeting with the ministry.

"Mahmood himself was not at the meeting," he said.

Sensitive issues

Taufek said Harakah was reminded at the meeting to be more careful in highlighting sensitive issues such as the sports betting licence, the Federal Land Development Authority matter and Jemaah Islamiah.

This is the latest in a recent string of Home Ministry actions against publications critical of the government.

Among others, the Home Ministry has banned comic book 1Funny Malaysia by Zulkiflee Anwar Ulhaque, better known as Zunar, and suspended the publishing permit of PKR organ Suara Keadilan.

Critics believe that this is a flagrant attempt by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's administration to stifle dissent ahead of a general election.

TNONEwo days ago the Home Ministry's portal reported that Harakah had been called to its office in Putrajaya to be reminded of its role as a publication (right).

The fortnightly party paper has been asked to abide by the permit requirements, including submitting the eight copies to the ministry.

Letter arrives today

In the latest development, Harakah confirmed that it has just received a show cause letter from the Home Ministry this afternoon.

According to Taufek, the letter was dated July 7 and addressed to Harakah managing director Kamaruddin Jaafar, who is also Tumpat MP.

Other than claiming that Harakah did not submit eight copies of its newspaper to the ministry, the show-cause letter also wants the publication to explain why it was being sold to non-members and is freely available at newsstands.

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