

Ministry does not 'control' Chinese dailies
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Deputy Internal Security Minister Mohd Johari Baharum today denied that his ministry 'controls' Chinese newspapers in the country.

In his winding-up speech on the motion of thanks on the royal address, Johari (BN-Kubang Pasu) said the ministry is just performing its duty in overlooking the activities of the dailies.

"We do this to make sure that newspapers abide by the rules and regulations set up by the government," he said, adding that this is done to ensure stability and harmony in the country.

The 'overlooking' is done via mail or face-to-face meetings with those in charge of the newspapers, he explained.

"This is not to control the newspapers, but to check if they are following all the guidelines we have set," he said.

Parliamentary opposition leader Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Ipoh Timur), who was dissatisfied with the response, asked Johari what is the relevance of having a 'super media editor'?

The deputy minister replied that this was routine procedure.

On March 17, Deputy Internal Security Minister Fu Ah Kiow said journalists must adhere to provisions in the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984 and be responsible in discharging their duties.

"As the deputy minister responsible in enforcing the Act, sometimes I've to call up to remind the media concerned when sensitive issues are published.

"While some accepted the reprimand, others feel I am a super media editor," he added.

IPCMC in final stage

Meanwhile, Johari also told the House that the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) was in the final stage and will be submitted to the cabinet once it is completed.

Lim then proceeded to question the deputy minister on the 'lack of commitment' among the authorities in forming the watchdog.

"In February, I was told that IPCMC will be formed this year, but we don't see any commitment concerning this matter. We are told one thing out of Parliament and a different thing in Parliament," he said.

Johari said once the draft is completed and sanctioned by the cabinet, it will be announced by the prime minister.

An annoyed Lim then asked the deputy minister what he meant by the word 'draft'.

"You keep saying draft, but until now there is no explanation given on this draft," he said.

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