

**Kit Siang sues Berita Harian over 'kafir' report
Malaysiakini.com
November 08, 2010**

DAP advisor Lim Kit Siang has filed a defamation suit against New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd over a report published by its Malay-language daily Berita Harian on Tuesday.

The suit was filed by senior lawyer Karpal Singh.

NONEThe Ipoh Timor MP, in his statement of claim, alleged that the report was malicious and false in claiming that he had branded Umno as kafir (infidels), particularly in light of ongoing campaigning then for the Galas by-election.

Claiming that the respondent had failed to verify the facts, Lim said the report claimed that he had given a speech at Kesedar Sungai Terah, when he had not.

The report, he said, could be construed to mean that he had interfered in Islamic affairs and that he was guilty of sedition in making the alleged remark.

Another possible meaning was that he intended to sow hatred in a plural society and that he was an irresponsible politician.

In his statement of claim, Lim said the report was directed to lower his self-esteem and position.

NONEFor this, he is seeking general and aggravated damages for libel, as well as interest and costs of the action.

He also said a *ralat* (correction) published by Berita Harian on Thursday could be used as admission.

Karpal later said he would file a notice of action against Malacca Chief Minister Mohd Ali Rustam to verify whether or not he had commented on the matter, as quoted by Berita Harian.

This will be sent to Mohd Ali tomorrow, giving him seven days to reply.

"We will consider our next course of action following Ali's reply - whether he apologises or denies making such a statement," added Karpal.

'Investigate the reports'

Lim later said the newspaper had shown lack of sensitivity and carelessness in what it published.

"This goes beyond Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's 1Malaysia concept (which requires) being sensitive to all races, as we live in a multi-religious society," he said.

NONEKarpal also renewed calls for new Inspector-General of Police Ismail Omar to quickly investigate the matter as several reports have been lodged.

"There is not only civil liability but also sedition and criminal defamation," he claimed.

"DAP will not sit back (if there are any more similar incidents), let's make this clear."

Last Tuesday, Berita Harian had quoted Ali as saying that the DAP and Lim have become braver by asserting that Umno members are kafir.

The daily issued a correction two days later.

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/147603>