

Dompok on Herald and Anwar
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Catholic newsletter Herald has been writing about other things besides religious issues from time to time, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Bernard Dompok.
MCPX

He said the newsletter had previously written about social and poverty issues as well as policy direction but had not raised any attention from the government before.

He was asked to comment on talk that the newsletter would be suspended for putting out an editorial on the upcoming Permatang Pauh by-election when its publishing licence was for religious publication.

"I was told that the article is meant to ask the people to pray for Malaysians who are voting in Permatang Pauh, and what decision they are going to make.

"I don't know the rest of the content so I think it will not be fair for me to comment," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

The newsletter was recently slapped with a show cause letter from the Home Ministry for allegedly publishing articles that are political and degrading to Islam.

Editor of the weekly Father Lawrence Andrew said the letter stated that Herald's publication is not in accordance with terms in the permit to publish religious news.

"I have replied them and pointed out that the permit application form did not stipulate what constitutes religious articles.

"We also asked them what is their concept of religion because this is not defined in the permit conditions or the constitution," he had told Malaysiakini.

Andrew also denied that an article published on June 22 entitled, 'America and Jihad' had degraded Islam or any other religion.

"The article was an ethical analysis about the world after the Sept 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre towers," he justified.

Herald, which publishes news and information for Catholics in Malaysia in four languages - English, Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese and Tamil - has a circulation of around 13,000 and a readership estimated at 50,000.

Anwar's Sept 16 claim

Meanwhile, Dompok was also asked to comment on PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's confidence in forming a new government come Sept 16.

"I think we have to allow them to claim whatever they want. I think we know that it is something that is not possible. I just do not see the figures (on MPs jumping party)," he said.

Dompok, who is also United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Organisation (Upko) president, said there is still hope that the federal government would raise the oil royalty for Sabah from three percent to five per cent.

He said although the matter was brought up last June, no decision had been made so far.

Asked when he would again raise the matter, he said it was still early as it had not even be a year since the general election but there is still hope as the federal government so far has kept its word, especially in handling the illegal immigrants matter in Sabah.

"I certainly am still be very hopeful and that whatever request that have been sent to the prime minister regarding Sabah will be given due attention."

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