

PKR challenges gov't to drop Apco
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PKR MPs today urged the government to terminate the agreement between Malaysia and consultancy firm Apco Worldwide, to avoid a negative perception by other Islamic nations.

The lawmakers claim that though Apco had disclaimed any connection with Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's 1Malaysia campaign, they insist that the company has strong ties with Israel and its former premier Ehud Barak.

"If the government does not revoke Apco's contract, we will be exposed to danger. People will link us to Israeli policy and speculate that we are in cahoots," said Balik Pulau MP Yusmadi Yusoff.

"I also challenge government to take action against those responsible for bringing in these elements that have damaged the country's image."

Yusmadi said this at a press conference that was also attended by other MPs including R Sivarasa (Subang), Johari Abdul (Sungai Petani) and Amran Abu Ghani (Tanah Merah).

The Apco debacle began last week when Anwar Ibrahim claimed during his debate on the royal address that the company was linked to the Zionist 'One Israel' campaign.

Following this, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz moved a suggestion through deputy speaker Ronald Kiandee this morning to give opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim a week to back up his claim, since he was not in the house to respond.

Failing which, Mohd Nazri said a motion would be moved to refer Anwar to the Rights and Privileges Committee committee to cite him for contempt and misleading the house.

Burden of proof falls on gov't

Chaos followed as the opposition bench vehemently protested the move, claiming that it was against the Standing Orders.

Last week, Mohd Nazri told the Dewan Rakyat that Apco was "not engaged to promote 1Malaysia specifically" but to "implement communications on the whole".

Yusmadi said that the burden of proof was not on Anwar but on the government to persuade the public that its decision to engage Apco was prudent.

azlan"I want to ask what is government's communication on the whole today? Since Najib is prime minister, isn't it '1Malaysia'? It's difficult for government to say it's not '1Malaysia'.

"We have everything in 1, '1JPJ', '1linik' and many others," Yusmadi said mockingly.

"If they say it's on the whole, it's more dangerous because Apco that we are concerned about is linked with the Israeli government. To me, today, it means in total.

"If they want to dispute that opposition leader's statement, his intention is to save the country from being in cohorts with a government which we have officially ended diplomatic

ties with... but the government now brings Apco behind veil (for instance) in communications (and) strategy," he said.

Sivarasa added that their discontent and hostility was not with the Jews in general but the fact that Malaysia has end diplomatic ties with Israel due to the atrocities committed against Palestine.

"If Umno BN does not cancel Apco's contract, it will give the implication that Israeli policy will become the basis of our country's communications.

"I challenge the PM that if strict action is not taken, the people will say that you are in cohorts with Israeli leaders," said Yusmadi.

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