

The Star denies misreporting Ramasamy's words
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 27 — English daily The Star defended itself today and stood by a disputed article quoting Penang Deputy Chief Minister II Dr P. Ramasamy as claiming of a conspiracy to oust him.

In an explanation published today, the daily quoted journalist Ian Mckintyre as confirming that the Penang DAP leader had even named those who were allegedly plotting against him during the interview.

"But out of fairness, those names were not published," the paper said.

The Star explained that the interview with Ramasamy was arranged and agreed upon by the leader on two topics: allegations of poor governance by "Indian DAP grassroots activists" and Indian community issues.

"As a journalist, I cannot disclose the identity of these activists as they related their problems to me in good faith and confidence.

"I felt that the interview was necessary as it would give an opportunity for Ramasamy to air his side to the allegations against him," Mckintyre said.

The journalist added that when he raised the allegations, Ramasamy had outlined the claims and described them as "senseless".

"He might not have uttered the word 'grand design' but said that some quarters might be conspiring to oust him ever since he was appointed to head the (state) Hindu Endowment Board," Mckintyre said.

The Star also insisted today that Ramasamy had agreed to its correction on Mckintyre's article, which was uploaded onto its online edition on the day the DAP leader had called to make a clarification.

Yesterday, Ramasamy lashed out at The Star in a press conference, claiming the paper had wrongly reported his words and caused an ensuing row with DAP chairman Karpal Singh.

On December 23, The Star reported Ramasamy as hitting out at his critics for their "grand design" to oust him.

The newspaper said his remarks came despite his party's stand that the "godfather-warlord" feud between Ramasamy and Karpal had been resolved on December 15.

According to The Star, Ramasamy had claimed his critics were plotting against him because he did not respond to their overtures for projects and favours.

The article had prompted Karpal to demand the Penang leader resign from his government post for making such allegations against the party, saying the latter's position was no longer

tenable.

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