

In communist rag, Mahfuz sees Umno hypocrisy
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By Boo Su-Lyn

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 — PAS vice-president Datuk Mahfuz Omar questioned today if Putrajaya's nod for a Communist Party of China (CPC) newspaper to be published here in 2005 meant Umno supported communism.

Mahfuz referred to a January 10, 2005 report by news portal Malaysiakini that quoted then deputy information minister Datuk Donald Lim as saying that the Internal Security Ministry and Information Ministry would monitor the contents of the CPC's overseas organ, People's Daily, closely.

"When the Malayan Communist Party was active in Malaya, never once did they get a permit to publish their publications," said Mahfuz in a statement today.

"Unfortunately, in 2005, the Communist Party of China's official daily was given a permit to be published, printed and distributed in the Malaysian market," added the Pokok Sena MP.

PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu stirred controversy when he told a Bukit Gelugor ceramah recently that those who attacked the Bukit Kepong police station — which killed 25 — during the pre-independence communist insurgency in 1950 were freedom fighters, including Muhammad Indera, better known as Mat Indera.

Mohamad, widely known as Mat Sabu, has since been accused of being a communist sympathiser by Umno leaders and sniped at daily in Umno-owned newspaper Utusan Malaysia, despite denying that he had used the word "communism" in his speech.

"No one in Malaysia doubts Muhammad Indera's status as an independence hero who contributed to Malaysia," said Mahfuz today.

"Yet, Umno-owned media accused Mohamad of supporting communism. I want to ask: When Umno approved the official voice of the Communist Party of China, did Umno also support communism?"

According to the Malaysiakini report, the People's Daily was then available in some 80 countries, including the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, France and Japan.

PAS secretary-general Datuk Mustafa Ali said yesterday that Umno had lied in calling Mat Indera a communist, highlighting a book endorsed by the Johor state government titled "Pengukir Nama Johor".

Mohamad has said recently that Mat Indera was already recognised a freedom fighter by Umno-controlled daily Berita Harian on August 13, 2010.

Mustafa said the nation's history needed to be reviewed as the official version only recognised Umno as Malaya's independence fighters. He has pointed out that the Malay Nationalist Party (PKMM) was formed in 1945, while Umno was formed a year later.

PAS also yesterday urged Putrajaya to form a Cabinet committee to review the history of the nation's independence.

Political analysts have said that Umno wanted to maintain its interpretation of history — which has been “propagated in schools and by the official media” — that it was the main force behind the nation's battle for independence.

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