

PM: Namewee supports 1 Malaysia
The Malaysian Insider
September 30, 2011
By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 30 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak today called controversial rapper-turned-filmmaker Wee Meng Chee “a strong supporter of 1 Malaysia” today, in the face of calls for action to be taken against the “Nasi Lemak 2.0” producer for past criticism of the country.

The prime minister and Umno president said that Wee, who uses the stage name Namewee, is “unique and unconventional in his methods and thinking”, when quizzed about the performer’s expletive-laden video attacking Umno’s Utusan Malaysia for suggesting his debut movie was not worth watching due to his allegedly racist past.

“What is important is that Namewee and other parties support what we are doing for the country. I understand he is a strong supporter of 1 Malaysia, so I encourage him to continue with his views as a blogger and [in] other media such as film,” the prime minister said.

In what is seen as a run-up to the next polls, Najib has moved to burnish his credentials as a “cool” reformist leader, announcing a raft of democratic reforms to security and press laws in his Malaysia Day address.

He has also employed a new team of image consultants who include the experts behind Tony Blair’s “New Labour” and Paul Stadlen, the former boss of APCO Malaysia.

A new Najib — one who attends concerts, plays pranks on national radio and speaks of being “cool” — has already emerged despite the short time the “Blair team” has been working here.

Following the editorial on his film in the Malay-language daily, a three-minute clip was posted on YouTube showing Wee slamming Utusan Malaysia for passing judgement on “Nasi Lemak 2.0” without having seen it first.

“They said ... that director, Namewee, he’s the one who criticised Malaysia. He did this before, he wrote that song before. Eh, ***** lah. What the **** is with the past?” he said in the video.

Wee also defended his previous songs as being patriotic because they urged Malaysians not to be racist, and pointed out that “Nasi Lemak 2.0” featured Malay, Chinese and Indian actors collaborating together.

He added that de facto law minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz had once defended him by saying his songs were not racist in nature, and that Wee had been “grossly misunderstood” by his detractors.

Utusan Malaysia carried an opinion piece last week in which the writer said she refused to watch “Nasi Lemak 2.0” despite the star-studded cast as Wee had previously insulted Malaysians, in particular Malays and Muslims.

Najib also reiterated today that "there is no ban" on the "Undilah" video that encourages the public to vote and it is "up to stations" to decide if they wanted to screen the clip.

The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) was forced to deny reports that it took the clip off the air as it featured opposition figures and a speech by Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah saying Malaysia had "many problems."

The regulator said that the video produced by musician Pete Teo was pulled as it has not been approved by the Film Censorship Board (FCB).

The Malaysian Insider

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