

Anwar's blog hacked, portrayed as Israel apologist
Malaysian Insider
August 18, 2012
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's blog was hacked late last night and defaced with a fake post that portrayed him as an apologist for the Zionist regime in Israel.

It also included an apology to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak as part of the opposition leader's message ahead of the Aidilfitri celebration tomorrow.

The de facto PKR head has accused cybertroopers from political foe Umno of mounting the assault on his blog in a bid to defame him and destroy his credibility among Netizens, minutes after the opposition leader ended an Internet live chat session on Google Hangout.

Screen capture of the fake post on Anwar's blog.

"Puak umno godam blog dan fitnah! (Umno tribe hacked blog and defame!)" Anwar posted in his Twitter account @anwaribrahim early this morning, in reply to another user on the social microblogging site identified as @anuarazizi who wanted to know if the apology in the special message was true.

The allegedly defamatory post by anonymous hackers has since been removed from Anwar's blog.

In its place is a message from the website administrator informing visitors that the blog was hacked at about 11.50pm and a fake post about a "special message" attributed to Anwar had been uploaded.

"We understand a screen capture of the posting had been successfully recorded and is now being spread by Umno cybertroopers with the intention to discredit and defame Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim," the blog administrator said.

Malay daily Sinar Harian reported that the hackers had uploaded a message from Anwar, claiming he felt ashamed for his party's "sinful extremist position chasing after the prime minister's office to the extent of defaming Najib and the latter's family".

"Saya ingin mengajak rakan-rakan saya dan jentera pakatan supaya membuat perubahan dengan menghormati institusi kePerdana Menterian yang sekian lama kita warisi. Jawatan Perdana Menteri adalah khas untuk orang Melayu dan Islam sahaja, bukannya untuk bangsa lain. (I would like to invite my colleagues and the Pakatan machinery to make changes by respecting the prime ministerial institution that we have long inherited. The post of the Prime Minister is special to the Malays and Muslims only, not for any other race)," hackers had uploaded on Anwar's blog.

"Kepada umat Islam di Malaysia, saya turut ingin memohon maaf atas keterlanjuran saya menyokong Israel tempoh hari. Sesungguhnya saya tidak mampu untuk menghalang kehadiran mereka dalam hidup saya, maka dalam keterpaksaan saya perlu mengikuti kemahuan, desakan dan asakan bertubi-tubi mereka. (To Muslims in Malaysia, I also apologise for going overboard in my support of Israel the other day. Truly I am unable to prevent their presence in my life, therefore I am obligated to follow their wishes and repeated pressures.)

The hacking, on the eve of Aidilfitri, appears to be the second cyber assault against Anwar, Sinar Harian reported today.

It reported that a fake Twitter account had been created two weeks ago carrying a series of tweets made to look like they originated from the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) opposition pact chief.

While no one has owned up to the hacking, PKR communications director Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad told The Malaysian Insider the party was confident the job was carried out by Umno's cybertroopers.

"We are confident that this is the work of Umno and its cybertroopers. Who else can we blame? No one else would do such a thing," he said when contacted.

"The message posted was about Datuk Seri Anwar's ties with Israel, among other things," Nik Nazmi said, adding that the website team managed to remove the offensive postings about midnight.

The Seri Setia assemblyman said the hackers had taken advantage while attention was focused on Anwar's chat with Netizens over the "Borak Bersama Anwar (Chat With Anwar)" session, which kicked off at about 10.30 last night and lasted for an hour.

While Anwar has seized on the Internet to deliver his message after being shut out of the mainstream media, his online presence is still less than his rival Najib.

A check with the social media monitoring site socialbakers.com on August 8 showed Najib has 1,135,529 "likes" on Facebook and 801,833 followers on Twitter against Anwar's 379,612 "likes" on Facebook and 179,830 following him on Twitter.

But his followers hope the Google Hangout will expand his appeal to Internet-savvy young voters, who are said to make up three million of the country's 12 million-strong electorate.

The PR opposition pact has always been seen as having the upper hand in cyberspace presence over Barisan Nasional, but in recent months the ruling coalition has expanded its online presence with several pro-BN news portals and a rising number of supporters taking to Twitter.

US President Barack Obama and Australia's Prime Minister Julia Gillard have also used Google Hangout to engage their citizens, with the former using it as part of his re-election campaign.

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