

Kit Siang denies 'Utusan' article, says it proves paper's seditious act
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By Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, April 8 — DAP today denied the allegations in an Utusan Malaysia article today, with the party's advisor Lim Kit Siang saying that it was a self-admission by the Umno-linked paper that it had committed sedition.

"It is an admission that Utusan has committed seditious, incendiary and inflammatory articles and they justify by saying that 'siapa dulu memulakan provokasi' (who started the provocation)."

"We deny completely that we had anything to do with the various allegations made in this defence...we did not provoke them. We had nothing to do with all the things reported in this article," Lim said at a press conference at the party's headquarters here, referring to a piece titled "Siapa mula provokasi dahulu?" (Who started the provocation first?) by the Malay-language paper's columnist Zulkifli Bakar.

In the column, senior editor Zulkifli claimed that DAP should be held responsible if chaos erupts, in a statement that echoes past warnings of a possible repeat of the May 13, 1969 race riots.

"The DAP should not be evasive in this matter and attack Utusan Malaysia.

"And they must be ready to be responsible if the country erupts into chaos because it was them that started the extreme political provocation to influence the Chinese to reject BN," Zulkifli had written when defending Utusan's choice of 'Apa Lagi Cina Mahu? (What more do the Chinese want?)' as its frontpage headline yesterday.

Lim challenged Utusan to list down the statements where DAP had allegedly spoken provocatively.

"What is it that we have said that we be compared to race-baiting and provocation and seditious outputs that appear daily in Utusan?" he asked.

During today's press conference with other DAP leaders, Lim also urged Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak not to "play with fire".

The DAP veteran leader asked if Najib truly believed in the "1 Malaysia" concept and the need for national reconciliation, claiming that the Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman had singled out DAP when saying that the party had allegedly misled the Chinese community.

Lim accused Najib of behaving in a "racist manner", asking when the leader would start acting as a prime minister for all Malaysians.

"When is he going to start becoming a Malaysian prime minister instead of a racist prime minister?" he asked.

Lim then challenged Najib to a series of public debates over the latter's claim that BN's poorer showing in the May 5 polls was due to a "Chinese tsunami", while insisting that the switch in support for Pakatan Rakyat (PR) in the seats it had won was from all races in

Malaysia and from the urban areas.

When asked if Najib could be looking to garner more votes within the party for his Umno presidential post with his statements, Lim agreed that it was "possible", before saying that national interests must take precedence over Umno's and Najib's interests.

"What's the use of hoping to get re-elected in Umno if he abandons his own signature policy of 1 Malaysia?" Lim asked.

Lim also said the key issue was Najib's stand as the country's prime minister, while the issue of whether DAP would sue Utusan is a secondary matter.

He also urged BN leaders who had defended Utusan to follow former Umno deputy minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah's lead in speaking out against the paper's choice of headline yesterday.

Lim said the Attorney-General must take action against Utusan if he is "professional and independent".

The police started investigating Utusan Malaysia for sedition yesterday, hours after the Umno-owned daily sparked a nationwide uproar with its incendiary front page report seen to blame the Chinese for the BN's weaker score in Election 2013.

BN took a severe beating this round and bled more seats at both the federal and state levels compared to 2008, leaving it with only 133 federal seats and 274 out of the 505 total state seats despite wresting back Kedah from PR.

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