

Malaysia's pendrive man denies links to 'Red Bean Army' fabrication
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By Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, June 3 — A Malaysian entrepreneur has denied accusations that he is funding or linked to the "Red Bean Army", a "cybertrooper" group named by Utusan Malaysia as being allegedly financed by the DAP to attack the government via social media.

Taiwan-based Pua Khein Seng, whose company Phison Electronics Corp was behind the world's first single-chip USB pendrive, has rebutted what he described as a fabricated report in Utusan Malaysia last week and has not ruled out legal action against the Umno-based paper.

"Firstly, this is a fabricated, baseless and malicious allegation and I honestly do not know how I should respond since it is an unfounded accusation," Pua said in a statement that was read out by DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng today.

Pua, who was reportedly campaigning for DAP leaders in Johor during the recent general election, said he is ready to provide co-operation to those probing allegations on the online group of cybertroopers.

"Secondly, I hereby urge the authorities who are investigating this allegation to contact me as soon as possible for the truth to be revealed. I will fully co-operate with the authorities.

"I will not hesitate to take legal action against Utusan Malaysia when the investigations are completed by the authorities," the Phison chief executive officer wrote in the brief statement.

According to Lim, Pua was responding to Utusan Malaysia's report last Saturday about "Penglibatan Syarikat Elektronik Taiwan disiasat" (Involvement of Taiwanese electronic firm being investigated) and other articles last Sunday.

Utusan Malaysia had reported that a Malaysian-owned electronics firm in Taiwan was under investigation for allegedly funding the "Red Bean Army", citing an unnamed source who said a photograph of the company's founder with Lim had been published online.

The source also reportedly said the unnamed firm had opened a branch in Penang, with the daily saying that the firm is allegedly believed to have close ties with the Penang state administration.

Today, Lim (picture) said that Malaysia has been working to attract foreign investments, but expressed his disappointment over what he said was a "different approach" when the investments come to Penang.

"Investments should not be politicised especially foreign investments, because if you politicise for investment, then I think the final loser will be the country," said Lim, who is also the Penang chief minister, in a recording of the press conference that was made available to The Malaysian Insider.

Lim reiterated the DAP's denial that it knew of the existence of the "Red Bean Army".

"Yesterday, I and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim denied any involvement in the 'Red Bean Army'," he said today, referring to Anwar, who heads the federal opposition Pakatan Rakyat.

"Number one, we don't know if there's such a thing called the 'Red Bean Army'," he said, adding that they lack the money to fund such organisations.

On May 26, DAP veteran leader Lim Kit Siang had similarly said the "Red Bean Army" was merely a figment of Utusan Malaysia's imagination, and that he had never come across it until the Malay-language daily reported it.

On May 25, Utusan Malaysia front-paged a report on the Red Bean Army (RBA), alleging that some 200 RBA members are on the DAP's payroll earning up to RM3,000 a month and that the party has been spending some RM1.5 million over the past six years to fund the operation.

The report also claimed that the duty of the RBA was to attack any politician, businessman or entertainer who is seen as pro-BN via social media sites.

But Lim Kit Siang said his party would not have the financial muscle to pull off such an expensive operation, noting that if it had spent RM1.5 million monthly over the past six years to run the RBA, it would have spent an overall sum of RM108 million.

"DAP just does not have this type of money although to Umno/BN, this is just a drop in the ocean of their funds," he had said.

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