

**Isma Chief Unperturbed By Dr M's Criticism, Says Up To People To Judge**  
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**By Elizabeth Zachariah**

Muslim NGO Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (Isma) is unperturbed by the stinging words of its latest critic, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who yesterday told the group to stop its provocative comments against non-Muslims in the country.

Isma president Abdullah Zaik Abdul Rahman insisted he was entitled to voice his opinions just as Dr Mahathir had the right to air his.

"That is his opinion. And I have my own. We (Isma) can accept that others have a different opinion from us and we appreciate that," Zaik told The Malaysian Insider today.

Yesterday, Dr Mahathir told Isma's leaders to pipe down their comments labelling Malaysian Chinese as "trespassers", as well as a call to impose Islamic laws on all Malaysians.

"He should keep his comments to himself," said the former prime minister, referring to Abdullah Zaik.

"They are not doing any good to this country. We don't need people to instigate racial riots and things like that.

Dr Mahathir, who is the patron of the Malay right wing group Perkasa, which has also been accused of racism and bigotry, said that Isma's statements were not helping to maintain peace in the country.

Abdullah, however, dismissed Dr Mahathir's comments, saying that the people were able to make their own decisions about the group.

"I think the people can judge for themselves whether or not we are constructive, whether we are instigating race problems or not," he said.

"Also, our comments were not meant to divide the races. It is not true."

Earlier this week, Abdullah said Chinese migrants brought in by the British to Tanah Melayu were "trespassers" and questioned their citizenship.

On Isma's website, he asked: "Who gave them (the Chinese) citizenship and wealth until the results of their trespassing are protected until this day?"

"This was all the doing of the British, who were in cohorts with the Chinese to oppress and bully the Malays."

His remarks were condemned by non-Muslim groups, with Chinese-language newspapers calling Isma an "extreme rightist group like Perkasa, based on racism and narrow-minded religious views".

Yesterday, Abdullah continued his attacks on non-Malays, saying that their involvement in politics should be "limited within the framework of the Constitution".

"They have crossed the line and they have meddled in the affairs of Malays and in Islam. This is too much," he said, referring to protests by non-Muslim groups over the proposed hudud law.

He had also called for the hudud law to be imposed on both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar said Abdullah would be investigated under the Sedition Act, following several police reports.

Abdullah, however, said today that he was not afraid, adding that the Malay mind should no longer be controlled by fear, and urged Malays to speak up against insults and suppression.

"They must have the courage and the strength to rise up and not hide anymore," he added. – May 10, 2014.