

Najib threatens to sue Malaysiakini over 'defamatory' comments from readers
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Datuk Seri Najib Razak (pic) has threatened to take legal action against Malaysiakini over the publication of its readers' comments with regard to his handling of the political impasse in Terengganu, the online portal reported today.

Malaysiakini said that the prime minister's legal action was initiated in a personal capacity and jointly with Umno through law firm Hafarizam Wan & Aisha Mubarak.

A letter of demand which was hand-delivered to the online portal late yesterday, stated: "The compilation of readers' comments in two 'Yoursay' articles published on May 14, namely 'A case of the PM reaping what he sows' and 'How much will Najib spend to keep Terengganu?', were defamatory."

According to Malaysiakini, the letter was signed by leading Umno lawyer Mohd Hafarizam Harun, who said that comments made in particular by six Malaysiakini readers were also seditious.

"All the accusations made by users on Malaysiakini.com were totally baseless, without concrete proof and are very serious, on top of having ill-intent (mala fide) to damage the reputation and image of our clients," Malaysiakini quoted the letter as saying.

"They, among others, are also intended to lower the honour and credibility of our clients as the backbone of the BN government...", it said.

Malaysiakini said Najib and Umno demanded for an unconditional apology from the news portal within 48 hours from the issuance of the letter of

demand, as well as a retraction of the allegedly defamatory articles.

They also wanted Malaysiakini to sign an undertaking that the news portal would not publish similar statements which they claimed were defamatory.

If Malaysiakini does not respond to these demands, Hafarizam was quoted as saying that his firm would initiate court action against them.

This includes filing an injunction to prevent further publication of similar content.

Malaysiakini editor-in-chief Steven Gan said they had expected such action after Umno mouthpiece Utusan Malaysia attacked the portal's readers last month.

"Malaysiakini, as always, will offer Najib the right of reply and to engage the portal's readers.

"Najib is more than welcome to explain to them why he thinks their opinions of him and Umno are wrong," Gan said. – May 16, 2014.

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