

Angkatan Perubahan Sabah joins calls for Najib to break silence over extremists
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By Anisah Shukry

Datuk Seri Najib Razak must speak out against religious extremists, or be seen as tacitly supporting the groups, Borneo-based opposition party Angkatan Perubahan Sabah (APS) said today.

"At this point, the prime minister must be brave enough to take decisive action to stop the attack on Christians and other races in Malaysia," said APS president Datuk Seri Wilfred Bumburing in a statement today.

"The emergence of racial and religious extremism is beyond the expectation and imagination of Malaysians. The people of Sabah and Sarawak are especially dismayed by what is happening in Malaysia."

He said the damage wrought by radical groups, such as Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (Isma) and Pertubuhan Pribumi Perkasa (Perkasa), would not be easy to rectify and would require Najib to stop them.

"The people are wondering and curious about the deafening silence on the part of the prime minister, whom they expect to lead the country. All we can hear is some ministers calling for calm and patience," he said.

In February, Najib had written in his blog that there was no need to condemn extremists, as the solution was to just ignore them.

"Do not give these extremists the publicity they crave. If no one reports their actions, they will not gain the recognition they want.

"They will not be able recruit more people to their cause. They will fail. But it comes down to us. We don't have to condemn them, just ignore them," Najib wrote on his blog.

But as of late, Islamist group Isma has put Najib's solution to the test by labelling Chinese migrants brought to Malaya as "trespassers", and warning of "foreign races" intent on burying Islam.

Earlier this month, Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) hosted a Christian-bashing seminar in which speakers warned of undercover Christian

priests who were sent to Malaysia under different guises to proselytise and convert Muslims.

Copies of books published by the Selangor Islamic Council (Mais) on the threat of Christianisation and alleged evangelism among Muslims in Malaysia were also distributed to those present that day.

While calls for Putrajaya to end the religious extremism have grown louder, Putrajaya has remained silent over the matter.

Bumburing said today that Najib's refusal to condemn the groups ran counter to the 1Malaysia slogan launched immediately after he became prime minister.

"Today, very few Malaysians take that slogan seriously because of what is happening. Some even interpret the silence of the government as tacit support for those sowing discontent, following admission from the government that it had funded Perkasa," said Bumburing.

He said Perkasa chief Datuk Ibrahim Ali should be arrested for saying he was prepared to launch a "holy war", while organisers of the UiTM seminar must be held accountable for the hate spewed by the speakers.

"UiTM belongs to all Malaysians, be they Muslim or non-Muslims. Why did the university allow such a forum where Christians were openly attacked?"

"For that, we are indeed thankful that the Christians, true to the teaching of Christianity, did not react to the attack," said Bumburing. – May 19, 2014.

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