

Amanah to Najib: To fight terrorism, clean up your backyard first

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By Sheith Khidhir Bin Abu Bakar

Khalid Samad accuses Umno of teaching an ideology of 'animosity, hatred and fear'.

PETALING JAYA: Amanah communications director Khalid Samad has advised Prime Minister Najib Razak to start changing the ideology that many people now associate with Umno if he wants to wage an ideological war against terrorists.

Speaking to FMT, Khalid accused Umno of teaching a racist brand of Islam, which he described as an “ideology of animosity, hatred and fear”.

He was commenting on a news report in which Najib was quoted as saying that the fight against terror must be multi-pronged, carried out not only through military might and law enforcement but also through ideological warfare to win over radicals.

Khalid alleged that the current thinking observable in Umno would encourage extremism. “Indeed, it fertilises the ground for terrorism,” he said. “So Najib should practice what he preaches and ensure that Umno does not continue becoming increasingly right-wing. The extreme end of the right wing is the realm of terrorists.”

He pointed to an incident in March last year, when several members of the Red Shirts movement threatened to burn down the DAP headquarters in Kuala Lumpur at what was supposed to be an occasion for the handing over of a memorandum to the opposition party.

The group refused to submit the memorandum when Selangor DAP official Edry Faisal Yusof and several other Malay members of the party came out to receive it. The Red Shirts insisted on submitting it to a Chinese member.

Most of the Red Shirts are Umno members and many members of the public suspect Umno is behind the movement.

Khalid spoke of the Red Shirts as an example of “a group that believes only its members have rights and other groups don’t”, adding that movements like it would typically project the kind of thinking and exhibit the kind of behaviour that could lead to terrorism.

“They will end up believing they have the right to take whatever action they like against a particular group of people,” he said.

“What Najib said is true – that an ideological warfare is much needed to counter terrorism. But we’re going to have to depend on other than Umno to lead that fight.”

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