

Malaysia

In Uber row, taxi group calls MCMC 'gutless'

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An illustration picture shows the logo of car-sharing service app Uber on a smartphone next to the picture of an official German taxi sign in Frankfurt, September 15, 2014. — Reuters pic

PETALING JAYA, March 22 — Metered Taxi Drivers Task Force chairman Amran Jan has slammed the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) decision to turn down the taxi drivers' demand to block access to the app Uber.

"I am upset, even though I was not surprised with the MCMC stand.

"This is a decision by a gutless government agency," Amran told *Malay Mail*.

He stressed cabbies were concerned with the safety of passengers, as well as saving the taxi industry.

"The Uber model can't fit into our taxi system.

"Uber only offers cashless payment and we use a meter. Besides, we should promote local apps.

"This is also about safety because we know there have been

many cases around the world affecting women.

"Last week, a local actress received an inappropriate text message from a Uber driver," said Amran.

He took a swipe at the MCMC for stating mobile app Uber had not breached any laws in Malaysia.

"Is the MCMC saying that a mobile app acting as a medium for illegal activities in Malaysia won't be banned?

"If that's the case, I am sure the MCMC won't ban an app promoting militant extremism, an app selling military outfits or a pornographic mobile app," he said.

"We will bring this up with MPs to question the MCMC's decision in Parliament."

Amran's opinion was also shared by Public Transport Users Association chairman Ajit Johl who said the Land Public Transport Commission and MCMC must work together to tackle the issue.

"This is about the rule of law and our sovereignty.

"Aren't we going to do anything to stop the flow of money going out of the country?

"At the same time, why aren't we regulating this mobile app promoting questionable public transport services?" said Ajit.

He agreed that public safety should be one of the areas for the MCMC to consider before making any decision.

"There's no driver's card or even a physical company that anyone can turn to should anything happen.

"Are we waiting for someone to get raped or killed?" he said.