

# *MP takes dig at WP strategy of silence*

**BY LIM YI HAN**

ANOTHER ruling-party MP has criticised the Workers' Party (WP) for not taking a clear stand on "tough issues".

Mr Hri Kumar Nair (Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC) from the People's Action Party wrote on Facebook on Saturday that the WP did not take a position on the issue of uniformed public officers wearing the hijab.

He said it had done the same thing over whether a law which criminalises gay sex should be repealed. "On almost every contentious issue, where taking a position risks loss of support, the WP has either sat on the fence or heavily qualified its position, while giving the impression that it has seriously considered the matter."

This follows Senior Minister of State for Law and Education Indranee Rajah's recent Facebook post that "WP straddles both sides of the fence and merely calls for public dialogue" on the hijab issue.

But political observers said parties had a right to choose their political strategies.

Dr Gillian Koh from the Institute of Policy Studies said: "WP has clarified its position on the hijab issue, which is to engage the public on whether anything should change from status quo."

Singapore Management University associate professor Eugene Tan said WP's move in staying neutral on certain issues is "shrewd and strategic", pointing out that it took a stand on others, like the Population White Paper. "Once WP takes a position, the whole debate shifts from whether the Government can justify its policies to whether WP can provide a better proposal."

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