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DAP-Challenge

KIT SIANG SAYS HE NEVER QUESTIONED OR CHALLENGED MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang said today that he had not questioned or challenged Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad, the Cabinet or the Barisan Nasional government for the decision to prosecute Member of Parliament for Kota Melaka Lim Guan Eng.

He said he did not do that for under Article 145 (3) of the Federal Constitution, the decision to "initiate, conduct or discontinue any proceedings for an offence" was at the sole discretion of the Attorney-General, which cannot be influenced by anyone.

"...I had at no time, whether inside or outside Parliament, questioned or challenged the decision of the Melaka High Court finding Guan Eng guilty of the offences of sedition and publishing false news," he said in a statement issued here.

He said he fully accepted that if there was to be a challenge of the court decision, it must be made through the proper legal process as had been done by his son Guan Eng in filing his appeal to the Court of Appeal on Friday.

Kit Siang, the Member of Parliament for Tanjong, was commenting on Dr Mahathir's statement yesterday that his (Kit Siang's) statements that there was injustice in court decisions were given prominence by the press and that in Guan Eng's case the government was made to look as if it was undemocratic.

The opposition leader also said that the opposition "is and had never been immuned from the law" and all it asked was that the Attorney-General should not abuse his discretionary powers to exercise selective prosecution against the opposition and non-governmental organisations.

In MELAKA, Guan Eng, the DAP deputy secretary-general, denied that the party had criticised the courts for convicting him under the Sedition Act and Printing Presses and Publications Act.

"No DAP leaders including myself have ever criticised the Melaka High Court for convicting me and imposing fines of RM5,000 in default three months' jail under the Sedition Act and RM10,000 in default six months' jail under the Printing Presses and Publications Act," he said.

The DAP had never criticised the courts as being unfair but only the Attorney-General for abusing his powers by selectively prosecuting only him, he said in a statement.

Lim, 37, said the party was only campaigning against selective prosecution by the Attorney-General.

Lim claimed that Dr Mahathir had been misled and received false information that the DAP was campaigning against the courts for being unfair when the party was only campaigning against selective prosecution by the Attorney-General.

"It is also wrong and untrue for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir to say the local press is favouring me when reporting my conviction and the possibility of me losing the Parliamentary seat," he said.

"Where has the Malaysian press ever dared to favour the opposition? Instead of supporting me, some local papers even go out of their way to condemn me," he added. -- BERNAMA

MOZ RM