

Campaign against suspension of Batu Gajah MP

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KUALA LUMPUR: The DAP is baffled as to why allowances for Batu Gajah MP Fong Po Kuan will be stopped during her six-month suspension when she will continue to serve her constituency as a full-time MP.

Its secretary-general Kerk Kim Hock said when he checked with Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tun Mohamed Zahir Ismail, he was told that her suspension only involved duties in Parliament.

"It does not mean she cannot serve her constituency or that she has lost her status as an MP. In fact, she is still required to function as a full-time MP," he said, when met at Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's Hari Raya open house on Sunday.

Last Tuesday, Fong was suspended from Parliament for her "disparaging comments" against the Dewan.

Kerk said an MP's job was not only to attend Parliament sittings but also to serve her constituents and that she needed the allowances to do this.

As such, Kerk who is heading the committee for a soli-

arity campaign for Fong, called for public donations.

He said apart from soliciting support for Fong, the campaign was also to inform the public of the urgent need for parliamentary reforms.

Kerk said a signature campaign confined to only Batu Gajah would be held until February, following which it would be handed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We will ask him to revoke the suspension on Fong," he said.

He said there had been many urgent motions in the past which had been rejected by Mohamed Zahir.

Although appeals could be submitted, he said Mohamed Zahir had not allowed such matters to come up for debate.

"If Zahir does not allow it, the Government does not allow it, how are we to appeal and see justice?" he asked.

Meanwhile, *Bernama* reports that the Kelantan Government wishes to cooperate with the DAP and Chinese community leaders in the state in organising a donation drive for Fong.