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Lawbreakers will face the music

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KUALA KLAWANG, Sat. - The Government will act against politicians or speakers from any party who breach the law during the Anak Bukit and Pendang by-elections.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim, reminding them to be "utterly cautious and respectable of the law", said they should realise the implications of a non-harmonious situation.

"Some may be claiming that the system is unjust, but it is too simplistic to say so. I hope all political leaders and followers will heed the advice by the Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also Barisan Nasional chairman) that we conduct the by-elections in a gentlemanly way.

"We should avoid hurling abuses against each other as such matters are tantamount to sedition."

Rais, who is also Jelebu MP and Jelebu Umno chief, was speaking after witnessing villagers harvesting fish at a pond in Kampung Kemin near here.

He said the Government, after receiving information or complaints about breaches of law and peace, would have to take action.

"This process definitely has to take place. I am giving a pre-emptive warning so that no one in the two constituencies resorts to breaching the peace or any law pertaining to public order."

He added that the provisions of the Election Offences Act which were before Parliament recently had yet to be enforced.

"Nevertheless, the law pertaining to sedition and other public laws are still intact," he added.

He was asked on fiery speeches and criticisms hurled against Umno leadership by Pas leaders in their campaigns in both areas.

He said the authorities would monitor each and every speech delivered during the by-elections.

Rais also praised the police for taking action against DAP chairman Lim Kit Siang for his alleged involvement in the distribution of seditious materials.

"For the first time, the police seem to be fast and sensitive to the needs of the law."

Police arrested Lim on June 5 for distributing leaflets on the "No to 929 campaign" at the Pasar Pinji market in Ipoh, Perak, but later released him on a RM3,000 bail on condition that Lim present himself at the police station yesterday to help investigation under the Sedition Act.

He was temporarily released pending further investigation.

Rais also said public prosecutors in the Attorney-General's Chambers were "studying" several speeches of Pas leaders, including that of Kuala Kedah MP Mohamad Sabu.