

03 JAN 2003

Rais-Sarong

RAIS TO LOOK INTO 'NO SARONG NO CASE' APPEAL

SIMPANG PERTANG, Jan 3 (Bernama) -- Arguments for the appeal against a Magistrate's Court decision here to acquit a man of indecent exposure charge will be look into by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim.

The man was accused of lifting his sarong and exposing his private part to to a Puteri Umno member during a by-election campaign in Kedah last July.

I will try to raise legal aspects that may have been overlooked by the prosecution or those the court failed to consider, Dr Rais told reporters after handing contributions to would-be Hajj pilgrims from the Jelebu parliamentary constituency here today.

Alor Star Magistrate Mohd Redzuan Abdullah acquitted Gua Musang PAS member Abdul Razak Abas, 52, claiming the prosecution had failed to prove a prima facie case.

Rais said the magistrate's request to have Abdul Razak's sarong, used during the "flashing" incident, tendered at the trial was "bizarre".

"What's important is someone saw the accuse lift his sarong. It's unnecessary for anyone to obtain the sarong worn by the accused," Rais said.

On DAP Deputy Chairman Karpal Singh's statement that it was wrong for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to comment on the court's decision, Rais said people have the right to express their opinion.

"The Prime Minister did not ridicule the process but merely expressed his view in reference to the trial," Dr Rais said.

He said any party had the right to comment on injustice in order to right a wrong.

"Winning and losing is normal in every case that is presented. The important thing is the method to uphold justice must be beyond reproach," he said.

Rais reminded all parties not to use the issue for political interests.

-- BERNAMA

APG MAI PC