

Police report: Parthiban 'threatens' journalist
Malaysiakini.com
Apr 26, 2007
K Kabilan

A police report has been lodged against BN candidate K Parthiban for allegedly threatening to finish off the career of a journalist in an incident that happened more than a year ago.

M Yohalinggam, 39, in a report lodged yesterday at the Kuala Selangor police station, said he was afraid that his and his family member's life could be in danger in the course of covering the Ijok state seat by-election which is slated for this Saturday.

In that contest, Tanjung Karang MIC division secretary Parthiban, 38, will be facing PKR's Khalid Ibrahim, 61.

"I constantly come across Parthiban and other MIC members in Batang Berjuntai and Ijok areas. I am worried that something will happen to me as a result of the threat made by Parthiban to me last year," Yohalinggam told malaysiakini.

Parthiban's camp immediately rejected this notion, claiming that the police report was made to discredit the BN candidate.

"The incident happened in March 2006. Why wait until now to rekindle the matter again," asked a Parthiban aide when contacted today.

"Even the incident is a minor matter. I don't think Parthiban meant any harm to the reporter," he added.

Parthiban himself was unable to comment on the matter as he was "busy campaigning".

Article on electricity woes

However Yohalinggam said his fears were founded.

"The report which I lodged yesterday was the second on that matter. I had earlier filed a report immediately after the incident," he said.

In his first report, lodged at the same Kuala Selangor police station on March 26, 2006, Yohalinggam said Parthiban had approached him on that day (March 26) to warn him about an article.

"I had written about the electricity woes faced by the people in Bukit Belimbing, Kuala Selangor and asked the Kuala Selangor district council to do something about it," he said.

"He was not happy with that report and warned me not to write such articles. In a threatening tone, he also told me he would see how far my career would go," added Yohalinggam.

At that time Parthiban was a Kuala Selangor district councillor and still is the branch chairperson of MIC Bukit Belimbing. Yohalinggam was then writing for the Tamil Kural daily. He is now attached to Malaysia Nanyang.

Fearing BN rough tactics

When questioned on the timing of his second report, Yohalinggam said that was because of the increasing rough tactics employed by BN members as the by-election draws closer.

"We can see them harassing and in some cases beating up people opposed to their candidate. I am worried that since I live in this area and am covering the by-election, I too might become a target as a result of my earlier run-in with Parthiban," he said.

In his latest report, Yohalinggam said he was worried that if Parthiban wins the by-election, he would continue to carry the grudge against the reporter.

"I am not satisfied with the manner my first report was investigated. I want a probe opened on my complaints before the polling day," he said in his report yesterday.

When contacted, a police officer for the Kuala Selangor police station said the matter was under investigation and declined to comment further.

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