

Pakatan threatens to drag speaker to court
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Pakatan Rakyat MPs vowed to resort to legal recourse to challenge Dewan Rakyat speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia's decision to suspend opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim and three opposition parliamentarians for six months.

Veteran MP and lawyer Karpal Singh told reporters that Pakatan will seek a judicial review for the way Anwar was suspended, with the motion approved without debate today at Parliament.

NONEKarpal said that Pandikar had abused his powers in making that decision, despite being urged to recuse himself as he no longer had the moral authority.

"We don't accept the motion, that's the reason we walked out. We may take it to court. There is a precedence in the case of Gobind Singh Deo where we in fact took the speaker, Pandikar himself. to court.

"The court has ruled that in certain circumstances, especially when the rules of natural justice are not complied with, it has jurisdiction.

"The speaker's action is so blatant that it cannot be in any way defended. We want a judicial ruling. We can't let him get away with this. We don't want this to become a precedent for the future," he added.

Opposition walkout

The press conference was held after the entire opposition bench staged a walkout, unhappy with the way the proceeding was conducted.

Anwar was first to be suspended following his claims that Prime Minister's Najib Abdul Razak's 1Malaysia concept was a copy of the 'One Israel' idea mooted by former premier Ehud Barak.

The Permatang Pauh PKR MP was booted out for six months when the motion was passed without any debate after the opposition kept interjecting to demand that Anwar be given an opportunity to defend himself.

After the opposition had left the Dewan Rakyat, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz pushed through another motion to suspend three other MPs - R Sivarasa (PKR-Subang), Azmin Ali (PKR-Gombak) and Karpal (DAP-Bukit Gelugor).

Anwar pointed out that as Pandikar had chaired the Parliament's powerful right and privileges committee that decided on his sentence, he should have recused himself.

"He (Pandikar) is the one who investigated and he is the one who metes out the punishment. The speaker refused to take a firm decision on this matter so we also refused to (stay in the Dewan) and continue."

'I wanted to debate'

Moreover, Anwar stressed that although he stood up to debate on the suspension motion, Pandikar told the House that no one from the opposition was willing.

"So I see that he is biased. So we took a stand to walk out before the voting to protest against the process. This is no justice and Umno-BN was so brutal and voracious. The sitting is a parody and insulted Parliament."

NONEHe added that Pandikar's assertion that he was only an "observer" at the rights and privileges committee meeting was "misleading".

"He said he was just an observer and was not involved. When we produced notes of proceedings he actually took the initiative and presented the case under Standing Orders 18 (3) whereby the member for Permatang Pauh (Anwar) need not be called.

"So you investigate, you make the recommendations and you are the presiding judge. It is a mockery of the entire process. That is the major reason we cannot proceed," he said.

Anwar added that Pakatan will meet to discuss its next course of action as almost all the heavyweights in PKR were suspended.

He also alleged that Nazri (BN-Padang Rengas) gave orders to Pandikar and instructed the speaker to evoke Standing Order 44 to stop a member of the House from continuing with his or her debate speech.

"He (Pandikar) was given instructions by the minister and blatantly disregarded the decorum that must be respected. Some of us have been in the Dewan for a long time and find this tragic event, shameful and insulting."

Karpal added that the suspension will only be counter-productive towards BN as the public will shun the ruling government.