

Kit: Opposition leader's suspension unprecedented
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DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang has joined the chorus slamming the suspension of Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim and three other Pakatan Rakyat MPs from the Dewan Rakyat on Thursday.

Calling it outrageous, Lim - the Ipoh Timor MP - gave his own twist to an old dictum, saying that Parliament has committed five "cardinal injustices".

"Firstly, although Anwar was referred to the Parliamentary Committee of Privileges, he was denied full opportunity to defend himself as the BN majority in the committee perversely decided to rely solely on a letter from Apco as the basis to penalize Anwar;

"Secondly, the refusal of the committee chairman, Pandikar Amin Mulia, to accept the minority report prepared by (Bukit Gelugor MP Karpal Singh) and (Subang MP R Sivarasa) as part of the report of the Rights and Privileges Committee to the House, demonstrates bias, unfairness and utter disregard for parliamentary conventions and accepted practices," said Lim in his speech at the DAP Serdang anniversary dinner yesterday.

"Thirdly, (the Speaker) did not give Karpal, Sivarasa and (Gombak MP Azmin Ali) notice and the fundamental right to be heard by referring them to the rights and privileges committee.

lim kit siang parliament pc 201008 02"He, instead, charged them with parliamentary contempt alleging that they had revealed information privy to the committee, and this goes against the principles of natural justice," said Lim (right).

The Dewan Rakyat had passed the motion to suspend Anwar for six months over his statement linking Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's '1Malaysia' concept with the 'One Israel' slogan, with the international public relations and consultancy firm Apco Worldwide allegedly behind both campaigns.

Karpal, Azmin and Sivarasa also suffered the same fate for committing contempt by criticising the parliamentary disciplinary probe after Parliament called a vote without debating the motion.

Lim was overseas when the quartet was suspended. He was in Bangkok to attend the funeral service of former DAP MP Fan Yew Teng.

BN has not learnt from 2008 lessons

"Fourthly, forcing through the passage of the motion to suspend Anwar without any debate, is completely unprecedented and unheard of, not only in the Malaysian Parliament but also in the parliaments of developed democracies.

"Fifthly, the blatant conflict of interest committed by Pandikar in chairing the parliamentary proceedings to suspend Anwar, Karpal, Azmin and Sivarasa when he is also the chairman of the Rights and Privileges committee, makes him party to the punitive actions against the four PR leaders," added Lim.

NONThe veteran MP also said that the suspensions are "the latest proof that the BN government has not learnt from the lessons of the 2008 general elections".

"It was a clear vote for national reforms to end the arrogance of power of unbroken Umno/BN rule for over half a century and that they are incapable of change despite all the sloganeering of 1Malaysia, Government Transformation Programme, New Economic Model and Economic Transformation Programme.

"It is now left to Malaysians to use their vote in the next general elections to administer the full lesson by sending an unmistakable message that the country needs wide-ranging reforms and institutional changes, including Parliament," said Lim.

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