

Two Pakatan MPs ejected over 'Israel' question
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Two Pakatan MPs were ejected from the Dewan Rakyat today after one of them asked the International Trade and Industry Ministry to clarify the existence of economic ties between Malaysia and Israel.

Er Teck Hwa (DAP-Bakri) was ejected by Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia after failing to follow orders to stand down.

He was asking International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed to respond to his question raised while debating the Budget as to the status to Malaysia's economic and diplomatic ties with Israel.

However, Mustapa had already sat down after winding-up for his ministry today at the policy stage of the 2012 Budget debate without answering Er's query.

Pandikar informed Er that the minister had already sat down and the floor was no longer open for intervention.

"Sit down YB," ordered Pandikar, telling Er (right) to stand down.

Er however remained adamant, refusing to sit and insisting that the minister reply to his question.

"My question is important. It concerns our ties with Israel. The people want to know, the minister must answer," he said repeatedly.

Er's defiance caused Pandikar to issue a stern reprimand.

"YB, sit down. If you won't sit down, I will have to ask you to rest," warned the speaker further.

The Bakri MP remained standing, leaving the speaker with no choice but to ask him to leave the Dewan Rakyat chambers.

However, out of the blue Lim Lip Eng (DAP-Segambut) (left) loudly interjected.

"Don't go out!" he cried out.

Noticing Lim's cry, Pandikar sought him out.

"Who said that?" inquired the speaker.

"I did," Lim answered.

Pandikar then ordered Lim to join Er for a 'time-out', ejecting both for their disruptive conduct.

Prohibited under an Act of Parliament

Trading activities with Israel are prohibited under an Act of Parliament, the Import Restriction Act.

Originally the Act prohibited trade with Israel and South Africa.

Both countries, Israel under the Tel Aviv regime and South Africa under the then-Apartheid regime, were deemed to be repressive and pariahs in the eyes of the world.

However, trade relations with South Africa were normalised during the post-Apartheid years, when the Act was amended in 1994 under the direction of then premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad, to exclude the African state from the list of prohibited trade partners.

Er's contention in his debate speech was that trade relations with Israel are still prohibited and he wanted to know if the Act is still in force and if our country does have trade relations with the middle eastern state.

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