

## **UM trio suspended over anti-PTPTN march**

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**By Nicholas Wong**

Three Universiti Malaya students have been penalised by the university for their involvement in a procession against the National Higher Education Loan Fund (PTPTN) on April 14.

The trio - Mohd Syahid Mohd Zaini, Safwan Anang and Haziq Abdullah Abdul Aziz - were suspended for one semester, fined RM200 and given a warning after a disciplinary hearing at Kompleks Perdana Siswa, this morning.

NONEMohd Syahid and Muhammad Safwan are students at the Academy for Islamic Studies. Mohd Syahid is a final-year Islamic political science student while Muhammad Safwan is a third-year Islamic studies student.

Haziq Abdullah on the other hand is a first-year law student.

All three students were represented by law faculty lecturer Prof Azmi Sharom at the three-man disciplinary committee proceedings.

On April 14, around 500 students assembled to call for free education and the abolishment of PTPTN.

They also placed funeral wreaths on portraits of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Higher Education Minister Mohamed Khaled Nordin at the gathering.

When contacted by Malaysiakini, Mohd Syahid said the students were unhappy with the punishment as it is the first following amendments to the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA).

"We can consider (accepting the punishment) if we were warned during the gathering, the police did not issue any warning," he said.

"The constitution guarantees the rights of citizens to speak and assemble," he added, claiming that even the disciplinary committee had acknowledged this.

However, the former president of the UM Student Union alleged that there was "pressure from the top" to punish them.

Mohd Syahid added that Azmi will make an appeal against the punishment on their behalf.

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