

Guan Eng: Gov't should reward, not punish Rafizi
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The government should reward PKR strategic director Rafizi Ramli instead of punishing him for his string of exposé, said DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, who is also Penang chief minister.

Drawing on his own experience of being jailed for defending an underaged rape victim, Lim said it was an injustice for people whose alleged wrongdoings were exposed by him and Rafizi to walk free.

The DAP leader spent a year in jail in 1998 relating to the allegations of statutory rape involving former Malacca CM Rahim Thamby Chik.

"Therefore, DAP calls on the attorney-general and the federal government to withdraw the charges against Rafizi in order to restore public confidence in BN's commitment to protect whistleblowers and expose corruption as well as to promote public integrity and leadership," he said in a statement yesterday.

On Wednesday, Rafizi and bank clerk Johari Mohamad were charged under the Banking and Financial Institution Act 1989 for leaking confidential details related to the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC).

Over the past few months, Rafizi had exposed a series of alleged NFC wrongdoings, mostly involving the abuse of a RM250 million government soft loan.

His exposé had led to Shahrizat Abdul Jalil being forced out of the cabinet while her husband Mohamad Salleh Ismail, the NFC chief executive officer, being charged for criminal breach of trust.

Lim said that the fact that Mohamad Salleh was charged had vindicated Rafizi.

"Salleh's indictment has proven that without Rafizi's exposé, no action would have been taken against this scandal involving RM250 million of public funds.

"If Salleh was not charged, then it is an entirely different story, but the fact that he now faces criminal charges proves Rafizi had done the right thing."

Whistleblowers bear the brunt

Meanwhile, human rights watchdog Suaram said prosecuting Rafizi would dampen confidence in the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010.

"The prosecution of Rafizi and Johari is a clear indication of the government's new venture in legalising and protecting corruption and cronyism."

Suaram said that it too had been a victim of a witch-hunt against whistleblowers for exposing alleged evidence of malpractice in the Malaysia-France submarine deal.

The group lamented that despite the evidence that it has presented, the authorities had chosen to investigate the group instead of the claims.

The Companies Commission of Malaysia (CCM) has launched an investigation into Suaram relating to its registration status as a company.

"We strongly condemn the powers-that-be and its powerful mechanisms to punish the innocence in order to protect the guilty," it said.

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