

Pakatan vows to bring in Pornthip if it wins GE13

MalaysiaKini.com

April 12, 2013

By Hafiz Yatim

Pakatan Rakyat and PKR have vowed to bring in renowned Thai pathologist Dr Pornthip Rojanasunand to perform the second post-mortem on C Sugumar, if it comes to power after the 13th general election.

PKR vice-president N Surendran said Sugumar's body has been lying at the Serdang hospital mortuary for 80 days already.

"It has been an anguished wait for the family members to perform final rites on the body as the present government under caretaker Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is preventing Pornthip from coming," said Surendran.

"Will Najib be able to bear the burden or stigma of not allowing Pornthip to perform the second post-mortem when he carries the country into this coming elections," he asked.

Surendran then vouched that if Pakatan comes to power, it would send a written invitation for Pornthip to come and perform the post-mortem.

The first post-mortem conducted in January shows that Sugumar had died as a result of a heart attack, leaving family members dissatisfied with the report and calling for a second independent post-mortem instead.

Pornthip had previously agreed to come to Malaysia to perform the second post-mortem, but later retracted her decision suddenly, prompting allegations from several quarters that Najib had pressured the Thai government into disallowing the forensic expert from being involved in the matter.

'How can we trust Najib?'

Also present at the press conference were Sugumar's mother K Manimakalai and uncle, A Kuppusamy.

Kuppusamy (holding letter in photo) told reporters that the family members cannot accept the results of the first post mortem as there were eye-witness reports, stating that police beat up Sugumar and then taken to the mortuary.

"We have held a candle light vigil and went to Bukit Aman. Initially the authorities

allowed Pornthip to come but due to pressures imposed by the government she was not able to come.

"How can such a person like Najib be allowed to be PM again for using such pressure. Can we trust him to lead the country," asked Kuppusamy.

Surendran said the only hope for the family it seems is for Pakatan to win the general election.

"This is not a political issue but a human rights issue. Pornthip is the closest independent pathologist who was willing to come.

"If we find other pathologists from other countries it remains uncertain that the government will allow that.

"With the Pornthip experience, the Health Ministry has allowed but then the government has exerted pressure on the Thais.

2nd post mortem financial burden

"What is the guarantee that if we apply or look for another pathologist the government will allow him or her to come," he said.

Surendran(extreme left in photo) said that Pornthip's expenses to perform the second post mortem will be borne by the family, but despite this they had to face this problem.

PKR supreme council member Latheefa Koya (next to Surendran in photo) said that two eye-witness had gave their statements to the police months back and till today there is no progress on the matter.

"They were interviewed for one and a half hours where they saw Sugumar being beaten by the police.

"However, there is no follow-up by the police on whether they intend to hold an inquest or charge the persons responsible.

"Police have not been coming back to us over any development in the case and it had already been more than three months," she said.

Latheefa said the hospital also does not want to release the post mortem findings until Sugumar's death certificate is issued.

"It is unfortunate the family has been given this ding dong treatment (a run around) in this matter. The family has agreed to pay for the second post mortem but is unable to do so, " she said.

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