Four plead guilty to damaging EC's vehicles
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By Lee Long Hui

Four men charged with hindering police personnel and causing mischief in Johor Baru during the last poll pleaded guilty in magistrate's court today.

Ng Yong Lin, 33, Sow Tian Min, 27, Kok You Chai, 45, and S Rajandran, 44, were fined RM17,000 each after they changed their minds from their original plea of innocence on their first court appearance on May 21.

NONEThey had decided to plead guilty at the court in Johor Baru after considering several factors, their counsel Chew Pong Him told Malaysiakini when contacted.

Two hundred angry DAP supporters had damaged two vehicles driven by Election Commission (EC) officials carrying ballot boxes to the tallying centre at Gelang Patah as they mistook the ballots for 'phantom votes'.

Police arrested the four shortly after the incident.

They were accused later of hindering Corporal Tenku Mohd Firdaus Tenku Ibrahim from carrying out his duty at Jalan Jelawat Batu 10, Kampung Poh Chee Ling in Skudai in Johor Baru at 9.15pm on May 5.

The charge was under Section 186 of the Penal Code which read together with Section 34, carries a jail term of up to two years or fine of RM10,000, or both, upon conviction.

NONEOn the second charge, the men were accused of allegedly committing mischief by breaking the rear and side windows of a Proton Perdana V6 belonging to Abdul Kadir Bahsar at the same place, date and time.

The offence comes under Section 427 of the Penal Code, read together with Section 34, which provides for a jail term of up to two years or fine, or both, upon conviction.

According to Chew, the four were fined with the maximum of RM10,000 in their first charge and RM7,000 in their second charge, thus bringing the total to a sum of RM17,000.

He said that he had pleaded to magistrate Mohd Azlan Shah Mohd Allias to lower

the fine as the four of them had admitted their offense.

However, he noted that the magistrate decided to maintain the punishment as the public interest is greater than personal interest in this case.

Nevertheless, he is glad that the four of them had not been sentenced to jail.

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