

Tian Chua slapped with one-month jail term

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PKR vice-president Tian Chua has been jailed for one month and slapped with a RM1,000 fine today for intruding into the restricted area of the Pulapol police training centre.

The Batu MP, who has a slew of court cases, was found guilty of violating the Protected Areas and Places Act.

Chua, who was arrested during the Bersih 3 rally on April 28, 2012, was charged because he had refused to leave the detention centre.

Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court Judge Mahmud Abdullah granted a stay of execution pending appeal, but the DPP objected and asked the court not to grant bail.

Under the law, a MP who is jailed for a year or more and slapped with a fine of RM2,000 or more would be disqualified and a by-election would be held.

'Charge an afterthought'

In a press conference later, Chua labelled the charge as an "afterthought" and a "fishing exercise by authorities".

Recognising the fact that questions will be asked of the status of several other elected representatives who are facing criminal charges brought by the government, he said that trying to convict opposition representatives would not "change the mind of the people".

Chua's jail sentence has been suspended pending an appeal to the High Court, which he said would be filed by his lawyer tomorrow.

"The whole charge looked quite ridiculous to me," he said, referring to his conviction of being inside Pulapol, which was labelled as a restricted area.

Chua said that the police were initially in agreement with his demand not to leave Pulapol until others who were detained with him during a mass post-Bersih 3 swoop, were released as well.

"But when I started advising detainees about their rights, I was arrested again. But

I was only charged a few days later," said Chua, who is the first MP to be convicted post the 13th general election.

Chua was brought to the Pulapol along with many others who participated in the rally, and claims to have been beaten up at the centre.

He was released after he had his statement taken at around 10pm, but he refused to leave the centre, as he wanted to stay back and accompany other civilians who were yet to be freed.

However, he was re-arrested and kept in a police car for over two hours when his attempts to give guidance to other detainees over their legal rights did not go down well with the police.

He was eventually released at around midnight, and only found out about the charge several days later, despite never being made aware that Pulapol was a restricted area, he said.

Eric Paulsen acted as Chua's lawyer.

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