

## **'What happened to AG's review of sedition cases?'**

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Attorney-general Abdul Gani Patail has been urged to uphold his promise to review all sedition cases in the wake of fresh sedition investigations against public figures.

Referring to the probe against former Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) chairperson Simon Sipaun and law professor Abdul Aziz Bari (below), Gerakan Hapus Akta Hasutan (GHAH) said that this goes against the AG's promise on Sept 6.

Further, they said, prosecutors had also pushed for custodial sentences in the recent sentencing of student activists Adam Adli Abdul Halim and Muhammad Safwan Anang, who were both sentenced to jail.

"This runs contrary to the AG's own 9th September statement in which he says that the AG's Chamber is 'always committed to carrying out their duties with responsibility and in accordance with the law in bringing prosecutions'," they said in a statement.

GHAH added that the prosecutions also contradicted with the fact that the AG's Chambers was tasked to draft a new law to replace the Sedition Act as early as 2012.

"We therefore call upon the AG to carry out his assurances to the public that the sedition charges will be reviewed and to do the right thing by dropping all the charges pending repeal of the Sedition Act," it said.

This was echoed by PKR Youth vice-chief Fahmi Fadzil who urged the AG to reveal the outcome of the review on sedition cases.

He said that although not surprising, the use of the Act on academics like Abdul Aziz shows that it is meant to clamp down on dissent.

"We support and stand with Dr Aziz. We salute his courage in presenting views which are often frowned upon by the government.

"We respect his right to speak as an academic and a teacher to the youth, but also to as a constitutional expert whose views are needed to defend the rule of law," said Fahmi (right).

Abdul Gani had on Sept 9 said that his chambers is reviewing all sedition cases, following public criticism on the matter.

The announcement came after law associate professor Azmi Sharom was charged with sedition for remarks in a news report.

In the last month, politicians, lawyers, activists and a journalist have faced action under the Sedition Act.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak in 2012 promised its repeal, but now says it is under review following differing views from stakeholders.

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