

Asia's top debater flays DPM's daughter

MalaysiaKini.com

Sept 4th, 2015

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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's daughter has a right to criticise the Bersih 4 rally, said one of Asia's best debaters.

However, International Islamic Universiti Malaysia (UIAM) law student Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman, 23, said, the same right should be given to all Malaysians, not just a select few.

"I see that only a few can speak out, especially the elites who are given freedom of speech. However ordinary citizens don't have this right.

"We may have different views but in the end we are fighting for the same thing, freedom of speech," Syed Saddiq told Malaysiakini.

He was commenting on Nurulhidayah Ahmad Zahid defending her criticism of Bersih as freedom of speech.

Syed Saddiq, who was crowned Asia's best debater in May during the United Asia Debate Championship, said there was clear discrimination on who actually had such liberties, especially in politics.

"I'm not politicking but we have to be fair... for example, in UIAM, only the government people can (enter and speak) but the opposition can't," he said.

FB posting goes viral

Syed Saddiq's Facebook posting criticising Nurulhidayah went viral yesterday:

Dear Nurulhidayah,

I respect your 'right' to free speech,

I hope you will respect our 'right' as well.

The 500,000 Malaysian citizens who attended BERSIH also have their right to free speech, yet the peaceful rally was declared to be illegal.

The 1.3 million Malaysian civil servants also have their right to free speech, yet they were threatened with disciplinary actions.

The Malaysian employees of the Sarawak Report and The Edge also have their right to free speech,

yet their voices were suppressed by a government-imposed ban.

(DPM) Muhyiddin Yassin and his colleagues also have their right to free speech, yet they were punished for speaking up for the rakyat.

(Opposition MPs) Tony Pua and Rafizi Ramli also have their right to free speech,

yet they were slapped with an arbitrary travel ban.

(Former PM) Dr Mahathir Mohamad, our very own celebrated former prime minister is entitled to his right to free speech,

yet he was called in for investigations for speaking up on behalf of the rakyat.

Free speech is a sacrosanct right which is an embodiment of a free and democratic society.

My disagreement with your statement does not disqualify you from accessing your 'right'.

As a fellow Malaysian, I am obligated to protect and defend your right to free speech.

It's your right,

It's our right,

It's Malaysia's right forever.

Let's defend it together

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Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/311047>