

PKR: Insecure PM the 'basis' for Sosma arrests

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The basis for the arrests of former Umno leader Khairuddin Abu Hassan and his lawyer Matthias Chang under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (Sosma) is that the prime minister is "insecure", said PKR vice-president Tian Chua.

He was responding to Communication and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak's statement yesterday that the government has always a basis for any arrest made under Sosma.

When asked about Salleh's remark, Chua laughed and quipped, "As if we were just born yesterday."

"There must be a reason? Yes, I know the reason. The reason is the prime minister is insecure and worried," he said at a candlelight vigil to defend the independence of the Malaysian Bar in Kuala Lumpur last night.

Tian Chua said there must be some truth to what Khairuddin and Chang was trying to expose, otherwise they would not have been arrested under a law purportedly enacted for terrorism.

"If what they are doing is just wild allegations without basis, just sue them.

"Sue these guys for defaming the prime minister all over the world, and let the public judge whether their allegations are true or not," he said.

After all, he said, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is about to sue former MCA president Ling Liong Sik for saying that the prime minister pocketed public funds.

Salleh was responding to former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who had claimed that Malaysia has become a "pariah" state because Sosma is being abused to cover up the 1MDB case.

Mahathir had made the statement following the arrest of Chang, who is his former aide, as well as Khairuddin's lawyer.

'Khairuddin, Chang not terrorists'

Khairuddin and Chang should not have been arrested under Sosma, because the Act is meant for terrorists, Tian Chua said.

"We don't need lawyers to know Sosma is for someone who has (firearms such as) M-16, AK47, or bombs in their house and (who are) threatening the lives of innocent people.

"That is what we mean by anti-terrorist laws.

"(But) they use Sosma against lawyers who are just doing their job of defending their client...What is he (Khairuddin, right) doing? Only making police reports.

"There are enough tools the government can use, and it's totally unjustified for the government to use Sosma and treat them as terrorists," he said.

There must be a very clear definition of terrorism, he stressed, for example that the acts are related to firearms or the killing of innocent people.

The duo's arrest under Sosma just proves that the Act is now just another tool for political persecution, said Chua.

"We are replacing a bad law (the Internal Security Act) with a worse law (Sosma)," he lamented.

Arrested for police reports

Khairuddin had been arrested under Section 124C of the Penal Code for lodging reports against 1MDB abroad, accompanied by Chang.

He was re-arrested six days later under Sosma, which allows for a person to be detained for up to 28 days without trial.

Chang was called in for questioning by the police twice after that and was arrested under Sosma as well two days ago

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