

Muhyiddin denies Sosma flip-flop, says it was abused

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Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin has denied flip-flopping in his support for the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (Sosma), stating that his criticism of the recent use of the anti-terrorism law was because it has been abused.

Muhyiddin said this in reference to the charging of 1MDB critics Khairuddin Abu Hassan and Matthias Chang under Section 124L of the Penal Code for sabotaging the nation, an offence that falls under Sosma procedures.

Sosma, unlike the Criminal Procedure Code, allows for detention without trial for up to 28 days and does not allow bail for those who are charged.

"My stance has never changed. I support Sosma to deal with security offences that threaten peace and public order.

"What I do not agree with is the abuse of Sosma in going against its original intent when the Act was created, as seen in the case of Khairuddin and Chang," Muhyiddin said in a statement today.

Khairuddin and his lawyer Chang were arrested for lodging police reports in several countries related to the bank accounts linked to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and 1MDB.

'Their action not sabotage under Section 124L'

They were accused of trying to sabotage the country's banking system.

Khairuddin's police reports were made after the discovery of RM2.6 billion in Najib's personal bank accounts.

Najib has denied taking public funds for personal gain while his supporters claim the money was a "political donation".

"Their action of lodging police reports on claims of wrongdoing by 1MDB to authorities within and outside the country cannot be said to be an act of sabotage under Section 124L of the Penal Code, which is for a security offence that allows for Sosma (procedures) to be used.

"My stance is consistent with the government's guarantee when the Act was created that it would not be abused for other purposes, particularly for political motives, including to silence critics and restrict the rakyat's freedom of speech and views," Muhyiddin said.

Muhyiddin was dropped as deputy prime minister in July for his critical stance on Najib's

handling of 1MDB.

Another minister Shafie Apdal, was also removed from the cabinet on the same grounds.

On Monday, the duo joined several BN veterans including Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, Sanusi Junid, Ong Tee Keat and Ling Liong Sik in condemning the abuse of Sosma.

Subsequently, BN strategic director Abdul Rahman Dahlan criticised Muhyiddin, pointing out that it was the latter who ensured BN MPs supported Sosma in Parliament when he (Muhyiddin) was the coalition's whip.

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