

Have your say on action against sexist MPs
Malaysiakini.com
May 16, 2007
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A Malaysian residing in Singapore has created an online petition-cum-poll on whether two BN members of Parliament (MPs) should be sacked for making sexist remarks in Parliament last week against DAP parliamentarian for Batu Gajah, Fong Po Kuan.

Created by C Paranthaman, 28, on May 11, the petition aims to get the support of Malaysians to bring the issue to the attention of the government. He forwarded details in an email to malaysiakini.

"Furthermore, I would like to prove to the government that there are more Malaysians who don't own a blog who would like to express their opinion as well," said Paranthaman, who runs an IT-based business.

The poll is entitled 'Should Jasin (Mohd Said Yusof) and Kinabatangan (Bung Mokhtar Radin) MPs be sacked?'

It provides for people to vote on this and to post their comments on the issue. Those who sign up are required to provide their name and email address.

To date, about 138 signatures have been attached, with almost all calling for the two MPs to be sacked or for an apology to be issued to Fong and women in general. Most of the comments were posted as 'Anonymous' in place of names.

Paranthaman did not say how long the petition would be kept open, but that he hopes to get the support of politicians to forward the matter to the government.

"Hopefully I can send it directly to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's office or at least get public attention on this and other issues that have been in the news constantly," he said, adding that it could serve as a new domain for those who would like to voice their opinions.

The issue has caused an outcry. Women's groups and other interested parties yesterday submitted a memorandum to Family, Women and Community Development Minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil and held a protest outside her office.

Caucus stand?

On the same issue, DAP parliamentarian for Bukit Mertajam, Chong Eng said that she would propose a meeting of the parliamentary caucus on gender equality.

"I'm planning to do it, and I will ask the caucus to make a stand on the issue," she said, adding that the group has not met since it was formed last August "except for lunch".

She pointed out, however, that certain caucus members had previously made "not so gender-sensitive remarks".

She was referring to BN MP Idris Haron of Tangga Batu who had made reference to the 'sexy uniform' worn by Malaysia Airlines female cabin staff, saying it could arouse sexual desire in

male passengers.

He had also defended Bung Mokhtar and Mohd Said by saying that their remark should be seen as a joke and that Fong should not have politicised the issue.

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Source : <http://www.malysiakini.com/news/67292>