

'What are you afraid of, BN?'

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Elected representatives in Selangor Pakatan Rakyat mounted a brief protest today against the Home Ministry's recent hounding of three party organs whose publishing permits have expired.

NONE About 15 state assembly representatives gathered at the entrance of the Selangor legislative assembly, holding up copies of Suara Keadilan, The Rocket and Harakah which have run into trouble with the ministry in recent days.

State exco Ronnie Liu taunted the BN-led federal government, charging that it is "afraid" of the three publications.

"These have exposed many scandals. This sabotage (against the publications) shows the weakness of the BN," he said.

Dr Xavier Jayakumar,, who spoke on behalf of the group, said disputes over articles that are published do not constitute a valid excuse to hold back the publishing permit.

dr xavier jayakumar official photo "Don't block or threaten (the media) [sic]... if anyone has a problem with whatever article, I hope they will go through the available channels," he said.

"If we want to be a developed nation, you must give the media [sic] freedom. We demand that the permits be approved, without any threats."

The ministry oversees the issuance and annual renewal of the publishing and printing licences, without which serial publications cannot be put out in Malaysia.

The permits may be revoked at any time, and publishers do not have recourse to judicial review of the minister's decision.

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