

Committee cancels 'ACA hearing' again
Malaysiakini.com
March 20, 2007
Soon Li Tsin

The Parliamentary Select Committee on Integrity today voted to call off a hearing involving Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) director-general Zulkipli Mat Noor and whistleblower Mohamad Ramli Manan.

Explaining the decision, committee chairperson Bernard Dompok told reporters after a 40-minute meeting with committee members that it was due to "new circumstances" surrounding the issue.

The 12-member committee, by a majority vote, decided not to hear Zulkipli and Ramli for the time being until the pending court cases are disposed of.

Ramli recently filed a suit against several relevant parties for back payments of his wages and pension.

Dompok said the committee also took into consideration the issue raised by lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who is representing former land and cooperative minister Kasitah Gaddam.

"The committee also took into account the concerns raised by the defence counsel for Kasitah Gaddam where the said counsel is contemplating citing Ramli for contempt," he added.

Last week, Shafee told the Kuala Lumpur High Court that the statements made by Ramli, who is the former ACA Sabah director, in his exclusive interview with malaysiakini could potentially prejudice his client's corruption trial.

Issue of subjudice

Last Monday, the committee had deliberated on the matter and the majority of its members were of the view that the hearing would not be considered subjudice.

Asked as to why the sudden about-turn, Dompok said he received requests from six members of Parliament to discuss further on this matter.

"The committee members have discussed further with their friends in the legal fraternity that this may be a case of subjudice. They went back and had more time to discuss with their lawyers.

"Some of them expressed there were new developments in this case (that needs discussion) so I therefore called for a meeting today," he explained.

Dompok pointed out that it may not be in the best interest of the committee to call the two individuals at the moment until Ramli and Kasitah's cases are settled.

This is not the first time that Dompok has called off a meeting with Zulkipli and Ramli. On March 8, Dompok cancelled a scheduled meeting but was forced to put it to a vote after a

few members complained that they were not consulted.

Four days later, Dompok convened a meeting where members were said to have voted 8-3 in favour of calling in both Zulkipli and Ramli. It is not clear what the vote was like in today's meeting.

Of the 12 members in the committee, only two are from the opposition.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/64789>