

**Gerakan Youth blasts Kedah's media ban
Malaysiakini.com
November 13, 2010**

The Kedah Gerakan Youth has slammed the Kedah government's ban on a number of media organisations from covering the state assembly proceedings.

NONEYouth chief Tan Keng Liang (right) said that Pakatan Rakyat leaders including PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim and DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang should explain why reporters from many organisations are being barred from covering the proceedings.

"This goes against the promise by Pakatan to allow media freedom in Malaysia. Unfortunately, the Pakatan leaders are still silent on this.

"I urge that the top Pakatan leaders can no longer stay mute on matters with the Kedah government, which is fast becoming critical. The freedom of press in Kedah is increasingly becoming affected," he said.

Tan called for Pakatan Rakyat to guarantee press freedom in the state.

English daily New Straits Times today reported that the PAS-led state government has blocked out most of the media organisation, including Malaysiakini, from covering the budget session of the state assembly that starts tomorrow.

It quoted a letter dated Thursday signed by the menteri besar's press secretary, Muhammad Helmi Mohamad Khalid, stating that the Kedah government would only allow Harakah, Star, Sinar Harian, Sin Chew Daily and Makkal Osai to cover the three-day budget debate.

Faxed to the bureau chiefs of all print and electronic media organisations based in Alor Setar, the letter also said that news coverage was being manipulated against the state government.

MB angered by RTM

It is speculated that the state's heavy-handed approach towards the media was prompted by MB Azizan Abdul Razak, who was visibly angered by an RTM journalist earlier this week.

penang kedah timber logging azizan abdul razak 310708 03TV3 had reported several days ago that Azizan (left) had reprimanded the journalist Samad Majid during a press conference after the state executive councillor's meeting on Wednesday, when he had asked the MB a question on the recent floods in the state.

While it is unclear what his question was, Azizan was shown scolding Samad saying, "You rude RTM reporter, in future when you work, work the Islamic way," before storming out.

It triggered a whirlwind of nasty postings against Samad on several pro-Pakatan blogs, prompting the journalist to lodge a police report this morning claiming that he was being threatened on the Internet.

Tan pointed out that it was sad that not only are reporters being banned from reporting on the state assembly, but are also being threatened by irresponsible people.

"The journalists are just doing their job. I hope that the journalists in Kedah will continue to be strong in the face of such adversity.

"At the meantime, the Kedah Gerakan Youth condemns anyone who threatens journalists in this state. These uncivilised actions are not the Malaysian culture," he said.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/148137>