

Raja Petra arrested, charged in court
Malaysiakini.com
Jul 17, 2008
Soon Li Tsin

Malaysia Today editor Raja Petra Kamarudin, 58, was arrested today and charged for defaming Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak's wife, Rosmah Mansor, and two others.
MCPX

He was charged with criminal defamation under Section 500 of the Penal Code at the Kuala Lumpur Magistrate's Court.

In a dramatic move that stunned the court, Raja Petra refused to enter a plea on whether he was 'guilty' or 'not guilty'.

raja petra kamaruddin arrest at police ipk 170708 03"I refuse to respond to the plea on grounds that the charges are both defective and mala fide (in bad faith)," he said, and repeated those words three times when each charge was read out.

The prosecution led by DPP Anselm Charles Fernandis took it as a 'not guilty' plea and requested magistrate Nazran Mohd Sham to set bail at RM10,000.

Defence lawyer J Chandra however argued for the bail to be slashed to RM5,000, a move that Raja Petra disagreed with.

He then attempted to sack his own lawyer so that he could argue the case himself.

Chandra subsequently asked the court for a break to speak to his client.

After the one-hour break, the court set RM2,000 bail, which was posted by Raja Petra's wife, Marina Lee Abdullah.

Magistrate Nazran also set Aug 15 to hear submissions from Raja Petra's counsels on why the charges are deemed 'defective and in bad faith'.

The popular blogger was curt and did not reveal why he thought the charges against him were defective after being escorted out of the court lock-up to the bail counters.

"Wait for Aug 15. There are a lot more things I'm going to tell you later," he said with a grin.

raja petra kamaruddin arrest at police ipk 170708 06Asked why he changed his mind about posting bail, he said: "Who said I changed my mind? My wife went to post bail without me."

Meanwhile, his lawyer Amarjit Singh Sidhu alluded that the charge was defective because Raja Petra was initially investigated under Section 203 of the Penal Code for giving false information relating to an offence committed.

"This is not right because it catches the lawyers and the accused off-guard. When we found out it was Section 500 instead of 203, we were shocked," he told reporters.

According to Section 500 of the Penal Code, "whoever defames another shall be punished

with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both”.

RPK: I'm in the mood to fight

Earlier today, Raja Petra, who was accompanied by his two lawyers and wife, told reporters outside the Kuala Lumpur contingent police headquarters that he was in the mood to fight.

“I'm in the mood to f*** the government. What more do you want me to say?”

Raja Petra and his lawyers went into the police headquarters at 10am where he was subsequently arrested by the police and brought to the court.

raja petra kamaruddin arrest at police ipk 170708 07Also present in court today were two members of parliament - Tian Chua (PKR-Batu) and Lim Lip Eng (DAP-Segambut) and several supporters of Raja Petra.

Raja Petra had in a June 18 statutory declaration implicated Rosmah in the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu.

In his statutory declaration, Raja Petra had also named the two others - acting colonel Aziz Buyong, who is described as 'a C4 expert' and his wife, known only as Norhayati Hassan, who is also said to be Rosmah's aide de camp.

He further alleged that premier Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, his son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin and a Malay ruler had been briefed on the matter and were fully aware of the allegation against Rosmah.

raja petra kamaruddin arrest at police ipk 170708 05Raja Petra claimed that Abdullah has handed over a written report from military intelligence on the matter to Khairy for “safekeeping”.

Rosmah has denied the allegation.

Raja Petra's wife, Marina, had earlier expressed worry that the controversial blogger would decide not to pay bail and chose to go to prison instead.

“This is a bailable offence. I hope he does not surprise me again and not take bail.”

Two months ago when Raja Petra was charged with sedition for publishing an allegedly seditious article entitled 'Let's send the Altantuya murderers to hell' in his Malaysia Today website, he refused to post bail.

He was released from Sungai Buloh prison after bail was posted three days later.