

Suaram: RPK victim of political decisions?
Malaysiakini.com
Jul 18, 2008

A human rights NGO has raised questions whether the police would be biased in investigating Malaysia Today editor Raja Petra Kamarudin due to the political nature of the case.
MCPX

In a statement today, Suaram urged the police to conduct a detailed investigation on all allegations and persons implicated in Raja Petra's statutory declaration made on June 18.

raja petra kamaruddin arrest at police ipk 170708 04It is also concerned whether the police would act impartially in cases which are highly political in nature.

"Could Raja Petra be a victim of politically motivated decisions given the highly political nature of his allegations and the high political positions held by some of those names who were mentioned in his statutory declaration?

"If this is true, we are witnessing yet another serious blow to freedom of expression - a fundamental right which has to take a backseat to political motives. This must be condemned," it stated.

The popular blogger yesterday was charged for criminal defamation for knowingly tarnishing the reputation of Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's wife Rosmah Mansor and two others.

He allegedly did so in a statutory declaration that implicated Rosmah and acting colonel Aziz Buyong, described as 'a C4 expert' and his wife, known only as Norhayati Hassan, who is also said to be Rosmah's aide de camp in the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu.

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

Raja Petra claimed that Abdullah handed over a written report from military intelligence on the matter to Khairy for "safekeeping".

Najib, Khairy and Rosmah have denied the allegation.

Probe the allegations

Suaram is of the view that the police should firstly thoroughly investigate the allegations made in his statutory declaration, instead of charging the blogger with an offence.

"There has been no revelation of the police's investigation on those names who were implicated in Raja Petra's statutory declaration.

"If the police have not called all those individuals named by Raja Petra in his statutory declaration, the decision to charge him with criminal defamation at this point in time is premature," they said.

According to Suaram, despite the reiteration that the government respects freedom of speech and expression by Information Minister Ahmad Shabery Cheek in his public debate with PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim recently, actions against Raja Petra show the opposite.

"The use of defamation laws to criminalise free speech clearly undermines freedom of speech and expression.

"Without proper investigation into the allegations made, the criminal defamation charge against Raja Petra is tantamount to an attack and a deliberate attempt to silence whistleblowers.

"We strongly call for the criminal defamation charge, as well as the earlier sedition charge, against Raja Petra to be dropped," they added.

Raja Petra also faces a sedition charge for allegedly publishing a seditious article entitled 'Let's send the Altantuya murderers to hell' in his Malaysia Today website. Trial is set for Oct 6.

He is currently out on bail.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/86364>