

Anwar lauds blogger's release
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Beh Lih Yi

Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim today lauded the Shah Alam High Court's decision to free controversial blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin from his detention under the Internal Security Act (ISA).

Calling it a victory for the people, he said: "I commend the courts which have come to the rescue, as they must do, when citizens are rendered helpless before arbitrary authority and its inclination to abuse of power."

"It is through the judge's commitment to justice that Raja Petra will once again experience the freedom that is the birthright of all Malaysians," he added in a statement.

raja petra kamaruddin habeas corpus case 071108 12Anwar, a former ISA detainee himself, also reiterated his call for other detainees held under the security law which provides for detention without trial to be freed.

This morning, the Shah Alam High Court had ruled that the detention of Raja Petra under the ISA was illegal and ordered his immediate release.

Judge Syed Ahmad Helmy Syed Ahmad had said that Raja Petra's detention was unconstitutional.

Provides fresh hope

Meanwhile, the Bar Council said the decision provided fresh hope for the judiciary at a point when the institution "had taken a beating from one judicial crisis to another."

"It is to the judiciary that an individual turns for the protection of his rights against the might of the state and it bodes well for the nation that the judiciary has shown that it is prepared to hold the executive accountable for any abuse of its powers," said its president Ambiga Sreenevasan in a statement.

"Judges and judicial officers who uphold the rule of law, without regard to their own interests and without fear or favour, are true to their oaths of office and deserve our respect and admiration," she added.

The Bar Council, which represents some 13,000 lawyers in the country, called for these judges to be allowed to continue enjoying an environment that promotes such courage, integrity and independence.