

Kedah MB's Anti-Academic Freedom Stance
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Dr Mustafa K Anuar

Aliran condemns Kedah Menteri Besar Azizan Razak's stand in lending support to the unjustified suspension of five college students under the questionable Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA).

The five from Kolej Universiti Insaniah (Kuin) were suspended because they were involved in a demonstration against the use of a religious teaching block to house a smart school. Their protest was within their democratic right to publicly express opinions about issues of the day.

Azizan's action not only blatantly violates the notion of academic freedom and freedom of expression, but also flies in the face of Pakatan Rakyat's consensus in opposing the oppressive UUCA.

Condoning the use of an oppressive law to punish students for their legitimate stand on an issue raises the question of Pakatan's sincerity and honesty in wanting to abolish the UUCA, which it has consistently opposed and condemned. The deed doesn't seem to match the pledge.

The Menteri Besar clearly is out of sync with the rest of the country, where, with the exception of the BN, the rakyat especially the younger generation are clamouring for greater academic freedom and democratic rights. In clamouring for that freedom, they want the obnoxious UUCA to be done away with.

We call upon Azizan to reconsider his official stand on this matter so that common sense and justice will prevail eventually and lend credence to Pakatan Rakyat's stated position that the UUCA will be abolished when it comes to power.

DR MUSTAFA K ANUAR is Honorary Secretary of Aliran

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