

# ANWAR BACKS STUDENTS' RIGHT TO PROTEST GRAFT

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PM says their future must not be sacrificed over differing views

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has directed the Higher Education Ministry and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to ensure that students involved in burning a caricature of him are not barred from continuing their academic journey.

His senior press secretary

Tunku Nashrul Abaidah said the future of the youth should not be sacrificed over differing views.

Nashrul added that as a former student activist and reformist, Anwar has consistently defended freedom of speech as enshrined in the Constitution.

"The burning of a caricature of the prime minister in Kota Kinabalu is a reminder of the people's hope that corruption will be eradicated at its roots.

"The prime minister himself emerged from the student move-

ment and once led the *reformasi* movement, which gives him an understanding of that voice. He has witnessed firsthand that criticism is a vital part of celebrating democracy," Nashrul said during the Prime Minister's Office daily briefing yesterday.

Police yesterday detained three participants of the Sabah Gempur Rasuah 2.0 gathering after recording their statements.

They were detained under the Sedition Act and for burning a caricature of the prime minister.



Tunku Nashrul Abaidah

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Meanwhile, Nashrul reminded media publications to strengthen their fact-checking process in light of a news outlet's publishing error involving Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Mohd Khalid Ismail's profile.

"Media management must not shirk responsibility and the fact-checking process must be strengthened to ensure public trust is not undermined. Baseless accusations against civil servants, especially the police force, are unethical and can undermine morale, as well as public confidence in law enforcement."

On Monday, the Malaysian Media Council called for accountability in the media without heavy-handed enforcement in light of the publishing error.