

Najib violated own pledges with Mat Sabu charge, says Pakatan
The Malaysian Insider
September 21, 2011
By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 21 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) accused Datuk Seri Najib Razak today of contradicting his own promise to improve civil liberties by charging PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu for his Bukit Kepong tragedy remarks.

PR de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim described the move as “malicious persecution”, saying it was in violation of the prime minister’s own reform promises made last week.

Mohamad, popularly known as Mat Sabu, claimed trial today to a criminal defamation charge of glorifying communist guerrillas and defaming the policemen and soldiers who defended the Bukit Kepong police station when it came under attack in 1950.

“Although the repeal of the Internal Security Act (ISA) was just announced, Mat Sabu was still charged for his comments.

“We feel this contradicts what Najib said, that the administration would use consultation and be reasonable,” Anwar commented after chairing the PR leadership council meeting here.

Najib announced a raft of reforms last week to give Malaysians more freedom but Mohamad’s prosecution has renewed fears of a crackdown against dissent.

Opposition politicians are convinced that the Najib administration will continue to prosecute its rivals despite the prime minister’s reform pledges, pointing to plans to replace the ISA with two new security laws.

Umno’s Utusan Malaysia had first accused Mat Sabu of glorifying Ahmad Indera in an August 27 report that quoted him as saying that the communist leader was a true hero.

Anwar pointed out today that Ahmad was recognised in the 2004 book titled “Pengkukir Nama Johor” published by the Johor government which names the leader, better known as Mat Indera, as a prominent Johor figure.

Johor Mentri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman had himself written the foreword to the book that lists several freedom fighters and leading figures from the southern state.

But the Johor mentri besar recently said that Mat Indera had planned the 1950 attack on the Bukit Kepong police station— which resulted in 25 deaths — and had tried to convince Malays to join his “illegal activities” in the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM).

He had also claimed that historical facts showed that Mat Indera was a leader of the 10th Regiment under the communist terrorists who threatened the safety of the public at the time.

“To link Mat Sabu’s remarks about Mat Indera to support for the communist movement is inaccurate.

"Our stand is clear; we are strongly in support of efforts to achieve independence through peace and not by following the intentions of the communist party," said Anwar.

Mat Sabu faces two years in prison and a fine if convicted.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/najib-violated-own-pledges-with-mat-sabu-charge-says-pakatan/>