

**Zahid, IGP dragging Malaysia back into 'dark' Mahathir era, says PAS VP**  
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**By Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 27 — Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar are dragging Malaysia back into the "dark era" of the Mahathir administration by clamping down on dissenters, a PAS leader said today.

PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub told HarakahDaily the duo's action against the opposition and the spates of arrests under the repressive Sedition Act were reminiscent of the authoritarian rule of then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"While (Datuk Seri) Najib Razak will be remembered as the first prime minister for a minority government, Zahid and Khalid on the other hand will be remembered as two figures who are dragging Malaysia back into the dark era of Dr Mahathir," the PAS organ quoted him as saying.

Last week, two Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders and two activists were arrested for sedition while the Home Ministry also carted off over 1,000 copies of PAS organ Harakah from shops and several distribution centres in what was seen as a crackdown on the opposition.

Student Adam Adli was the first to be detained while PKR's Batu MP Chua Tian Chang, activist Haris Ibrahim and PAS's Datuk Thamrin Ghafar Baba were arrested a few days after.

Several PR leaders are also under police investigation for their involvement in a series of rallies held nationwide to protest what they allege to be electoral fraud during Election 2013.

"When I spoke last Wednesday before supporters who were protesting the arrest of Adam Adli, I told them Adam should not have been arrested. He was harmless, he did not carry weapons, burn houses or instigated people to do things that threaten public security.

"So did Thamrin, Tian Chua and Haris. They did not ask anyone to carry out an armed insurrection," the former Kubang Kerian lawmaker said.

Adam Adli was charged with uttering a seditious statement at a May 13 forum where he allegedly questioned the results of Election 2013 and called on Malaysians to take to the streets to boot Barisan Nasional (BN) from Putrajaya.

According to charge sheet, his words had a seditious tendency and were aimed at rallying Malaysians to change the current government through undemocratic means.

His statement, originally issued in Malay, said: "Take my details, lodge a police report, because today, I would like to invite all those here today to gather and take to the streets to seize back our power! Can we do that? Can we do that? Can we do that? We do not have much time left, get ready, buy shoes, buy tracksuits, buy jeans, get ready to take to the streets because in a third world country like Malaysia, elections cannot topple a government.

"Only the people's power can topple a government. Remember, ladies and gentlemen, this

is the only opportunity we have.”

Charged under Section 4(1)(b) of the Sedition Act 1948, the Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris undergraduate faces a jail term of not less three years, or a fine of up to RM5,000 or both, if convicted.

Authorities have not charge the three PR leaders but their arrests are believed to be in relation to the same forum.

Leaders from the opposition bloc have blamed the clamp down on Zahid and Abdul Khalid, whom they accused of being more interested in political manoeuvring than doing their job to curb rising crime.

Salahuddin echoed the view and asked why Abdul Khalid was ardently “victimising” PR leaders.

“While his own sister was robbed and the sibling of the deputy prime minister’s house was broken into, Khalid should be focusing on tackling crime and not do other things to please the Umno warlords,” he said.

Salahuddin insisted that the allegation of PR-backed plot to topple the government through street demonstrations was fictitious and created to justify the clampdown on a strengthening opposition.

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