

Pakatan men, anti-BN activists charged with sedition
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 29 — Four men were today charged under the Sedition Act 1948 with uttering words that have the tendency to call on Malaysians to change the government by unlawful means.

All four — politicians Tamrin Ghafar and Chua Tian Chang along with activists Haris Ibrahim and Muhammad Safwan Anang — pleaded not guilty when the charges under Section 4 (1) (b) of the Sedition Act were jointly read out to them in the Sessions Court here.

If convicted under the same section, the four will be liable for a fine of up to RM5,000 and a jail term of up to three years, which could possibly see elected representative Chua losing his Batu parliamentary seat.

Judge Norsharidah Awang set the bail at RM5,000 each for the four accused, but Safwan's lawyer later told reporters that he is refusing to be bailed out.

The court set July 2 as the trial date.

PAS's Tamrin, PKR's Chua and Anything But Umno (ABU) chief Haris were re-arrested yesterday, four days after a magistrate rejected a police application for their remand under the Sedition Act 1948 and the Penal Code.

Speaking to The Malaysian Insider last night, Haris' lawyer Gobind Singh Deo said: "The police have obtained a warrant of arrest so now they are arrested. We are still short of details at the moment but we believe they are arrested for sedition. Pursuant to the warrant they should be brought to court as soon as possible which is tomorrow morning.

"We are still trying to get details as to where and what time will they be charged. I don't understand why they need to be detained overnight if they are to be charged. They can just be brought to court tomorrow but a warrant has been issued and we have to respect that".

According to other reports on Twitter last night, student activist Muhammad Safwan Anang had also been detained by police.

The four were not detained overnight but were released last night by the police after their statements were recorded at the IPD Dang Wangi.

On May 24, Tamrin, Haris and Tian Chua were freed after their initial detention by police.

Pakatan Rakyat (PR) had earlier described the arrests as part of a national crackdown on the federal opposition.

All three were believed to have been originally detained over their involvement in a forum on May 13 over the results of the just-concluded general election.

Last week, student activist Adam Adli was charged with sedition for his involvement in the same forum where he was accused of rallying Malaysians to take to the streets to topple the BN government.

The 24-year-old pleaded not guilty and was released on RM5,000 bail with his trial set for a mention on July 2.

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