

**Rafizi cries foul, accuses "political masters" of trying to disqualify opposition MPs**  
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**BY RITA JONG**

Rafizi Ramli cried foul and said the charge against him over the Black 505 rally was politically motivated to oust him as a member of parliament, should he be found guilty.

Rafizi, who is Pandan MP, and Seremban MP Anthony Loke Siew Fook stand to lose their posts if the court finds them guilty and fines them more than RM2,000. This is because the election law states that any lawmaker who is fined RM2,000 and above for any offence would be automatically disqualified.

Rafizi, Loke and secretariat Mohamad Adib Ishar were charged with organising the Black 505 rally, the main charge being their failure to get permission from the Kuala Lumpur City Hall to use Padang Merbok for the gathering.

They were charged under Section 15(3) of the Peaceful Assembly Act 2012 which carries a maximum fine of RM10,000 upon conviction.

Speaking to reporters after proceedings, Rafizi said "political masters" should stop what they are doing. "We will not be afraid even if you keep charging us in court."

Rafizi also said the decision to charge them was just a series of attempts by political leaders to disqualify them (him and Loke).

"For me, this is the second attempt, as I am currently on trial for a Bafia charge at the Shah Alam Sessions Court. But for Loke, this would be his first."

Rafizi is charged under the Banking and Financial Institutions Act (Bafia) for allegedly revealing confidential banking details linked to the National Feedlot Corporation scandal.

If found guilty, he could be liable to a three-year jail term or a RM3 million fine, or both.

One politician has come close to being disqualified as an MP after being fined RM3,000 for injuring a policeman in 2007. In 2010, Batu MP Tian Chua was fined by the magistrate's court. Following an appeal, also in 2010, the KL High Court lowered the fine to RM2,000, to 'avoid a by-election'.

The decision, however, still caused a debate among politicians and lawyers over the cut-off point of the fine as the law states that an MP would be disqualified if he was sentenced to a fine of RM2,000 and more.

Tian Chua later appealed the High Court's decision in May 2011, but his appeal was dismissed by the Court of Appeal on technical grounds.

In June 2011, Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia said Tian Chua was to remain as Batu MP in line with the high court's judgment that the judge wanted to avoid a by-election in that constituency. - July 24,2013.

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/rafizi-cries-foul-accuses-political-masters-of-trying-to-disqualify-opposit>