

**Sarawak DAP chief under fire for "absurd" statement on crime spree**  
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Sarawak DAP chief Chong Chieng Jen (pic) has come under fire from state Barisan Nasional representatives and the police for his "absurd" statements on the recent spate of violent crimes.

Chong, in a press conference on Monday, had remarked that the BN government is deliberately allowing crimes in the country to rise to justify reintroducing preventive laws.

State police chief Datuk Acryl Sani Abdullah pointed out that no right-thinking government would put its people in harm's way just to achieve its objective.

"This kind of statement should not come from a man of Chong's stature and standing," The Borneo Post reported Acryl as saying.

"The public must do away with the thinking that preventive laws benefit the police. They are for the safety of the public, not for the ease of our job. Though we are the police, we are also part of the society at large. It is also our wish to have a safe society," he added.

He noted that those suspected of committing the recent violent crimes were mostly former detainees under the Emergency Ordinance (EO).

"The NGOs and the opposition had been calling for the law to be abolished. With the abolishment of EO, all those detained under EO were released as there is no more law to hold them anymore. And now, the opposition is blaming the government for the rising crimes. This does not make sense."

In calling Chong's statement as "very irresponsible and pure nonsense", Deputy Home Minister Datuk Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar said the former was trying to seek cheap publicity.

"Chong should speak and behave like a parliamentarian rather than as a publicity seeker," the Santubong Member of Parliament criticised.

Assistant Minister of Youth Development Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah reiterated Acryl's admonishment, saying that no responsible government would resort to orchestrated violence against its people.

"The statement by Chong is both irresponsible and malicious. DAP is trying to spin the issue and place the blame on the government and the police," said the Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) supreme council member and Asajaya assemblyman,

He commented that when preventive laws like the Internal Security Act (ISA) and the EO were abolished, almost 3,000 hardcore criminals were freed from detention.

"After ISA and EO were abolished, the spate of shootings and serious crimes increased - it's too much of a coincidence," Karim said.

Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) president Tan Sri Dr James Masing also pointed out that no

rational leader would sacrifice the welfare of the people to prove a point.

Chong, the land Development Minister said, was trying to score political points with his statement.

"You cannot expect to have a peaceful society when you release hundreds of registered bad characters into our streets in the name of liberalism. The police alone can't tackle this menace if we, the politicians, fail to understand that security of the majority takes precedence over the rights of the recalcitrant few."

State BN backbencher chairman Abdullah Saidol perceived Chong's statements as a manifestation of the opposition's political culture which promoted hatred and prejudice for political scores and popularity.

"Coming from the opposition, probably we should not be surprised because PKR had used a similar tone when talking about the invasion in Lahad Datu. Both the increase in violent crimes and Lahad Datu invasion involved loss of lives.

"Using these issues to gain political mileage shows how insensitive the opposition can be," the Semop assemblyman chided.

"I am truly amazed that the honourable Bandar Kuching MP could come up with such a shallow and ridiculous statement." - August 14, 2013.

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