

Will Sarawak bar Anwar?

Free Malaysia Today

24 March 2014

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KUCHING: Speculations that Perkasa's Ibrahim Ali was seen in Sarawak has thrown doubt on Chief Minister Adenan Satem's stand to bar race and religious extremist from entering into the state.

Ibrahim was allegedly allowed to enter the state to officiate a Perkasa Sarawak event recently.

Responding to this, Batu Lintang assemblyman See Chee How said: "His entry should have been refused if the state government is true to the words of our new CM to preserve the racial and religious harmony and political stability in Sarawak."

Adenan had on Saturday said the government would not hesitate to bar religious bigots, racists and trouble-makers from Sarawak.

He also warned those already in the state that they will be deported if they stoked racial or religious tensions.

Adenan's statement is seen as warning to PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim who is scheduled to visit Mukah tomorrow.

Speculations are rife that the state will bar Anwar from entering and campaigning for the PKR candidate in the Balingian by-election. PKR is fielding Abdul Jalil Bujang for the March 29 by-election. The seat fell vacant after its incumbent former CM Taib Mahmud stepped down to assume the post of Sarawak Governor.

"Sarawak PKR and our coalition partners in Pakatan Rakyat are fully behind him (Adenan) if the chief minister and state government were to exercise our state's autonomous prerogative in immigration to keep out racist and religious bigots from Peninsular Malaysia.

"However, we will object to the misuse and abuse of such state discretionary power to bar opposition and non-governmental organisation leaders and members to come into Sarawak for legitimate political activities," See reportedly told Borneo Post.

See, who is a lawyer, said any such action by the state government must be in accordance with the Federal Constitution, the specific provisions in the Immigration Act and the rules of natural justice.

"We will not hesitate to seek judicial intervention if there is misuse and abuse of such prerogative, to protect the sanctity and integrity of our constitution and the rule of law in Sarawak," he said.

He pointed out that in the Immigration Act, the restriction of Malaysian citizen's right to enter Sarawak and Sabah under Section 66 is subjected to the expressed provisions under Sections 67

and 68 that members of federal government, judges, civil servants and those citizens who are entering the East Malaysian states for legitimate political activities are allowed to do so.

“Hence, there is no justification for the Sarawak government to bar parliamentary opposition leaders and members of Pakatan Rakyat coalition from Peninsular Malaysia to come to Sarawak to assist PKR candidate in their election campaign in this Balingian by-election.

“I am persuaded by our newly appointed Chief Minister that the immigration autonomous prerogative will not be abused for the purpose of this election, because he is a lawyer by training and had practised law in his earlier years,” he said.

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