

**Rayer sedition charges an insult to democracy, says DAP**  
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**BY LOOI SUE-CHERN**

The sedition charges against Seri Delima assemblyman R.S.N. Rayer for his "celaka Umno" remark in the state legislative assembly are an insult to democracy and the Penang legislative assembly, said DAP.

Secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said this was the first time in the country's history that it was seditious to criticise a political party.

"DAP is very shocked that the attorney-general still wanted to charge Rayer for sedition over a speech he made at the state assembly.

"Under the law, Rayer had immunity as a member of the assembly. This is an insult to democracy, to the assembly, which is the highest institution in the system.

"If it is seditious to criticise a political party, why have Barisan Nasional leaders never faced action for doing the same?" he said to reporters today outside the George Town Sessions Court after Rayer was charged.

Lim, who is also Penang chief minister, said there was a double standard in such a case.

Rayer is now facing double sedition charges for making the remark against Umno at the state assembly on May 20 and for repeating it to the crowd at a night ceramah on May 22 in Island Glades during the Bukit Gelugor by-election.

Lim said the sedition charges were also indications of political vengeance and spite against DAP elected reps.

"This is not done based on the law, but because of politics.

"We will ask our lawyers to fight the cases until the very end. That is the spirit we have to uphold – the Constitution and democratic principles, and to fight for justice," he said.

Rayer's lawyer Gobind Singh Deo said the actions of the attorney-general on all recent sedition cases involving Pakatan Rakyat elected reps showed inconsistency with what Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had said.

Najib had previously said that Putrajaya would repeal the Sedition Act.

"In parliament, Najib said the government aims to be the best democracy in the world. But this now shows the opposite," said Gobind.

"DAP has consistently said it will fight the Sedition Act. We are also calling for all the sedition charges on our leaders to be withdrawn."

Yesterday, PAS's Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad was charged with sedition over remarks on the Selangor sultan and the Selangor Islamic Affairs Council (Mais).

Former Perak MB Datuk Seri Nizar Jamaluddin from PAS was charged on Monday for defaming Najib in a speech two years ago.

PKR vice-president N. Surendran, who is Bagan Serai MP, was charged for

sedition on August 19 over his remarks on opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's sodomy trial.

On May 5 this year, Seputeh MP Teresa Kok, who is also DAP vice-president, was also charged with sedition over her "Onederful Malaysia" videoclip.

Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli of PKR is being investigated for sedition over a number of cases. The latest is for alleging that Umno was out to topple the Selangor Pakatan Rakyat government through underhanded tactics. – August 27, 2014.

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