

**Barisan must own up to sedition charges against Pakatan, says DAP
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Barisan Nasional component parties and Cabinet ministers must be held accountable for the sedition charges being slapped on Pakatan Rakyat leaders, DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang said.

He said it was not just Attorney-General Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak who must be held responsible for this "new despotism" in Malaysia.

"The BN component parties and leaders must either dissociate themselves from the democratic regressions or must be held whether as principals or as having aided and abetted in the New Despotism," said Lim in a statement.

Lim said Najib's new despotism had even topped Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in using the Sedition Act to stifle dissent.

He said Najib was setting a record for invoking the draconian law against Pakatan MPs and assemblymen, which he added was ironic since he pledged in July 2012 that the Sedition Act would be abolished in line with Putrajaya's transformation plan.

"Five MPs, including the late Karpal Singh and one state assemblyman, had been charged with sedition in the six-year Najib premiership, while the 22 years of Dr Mahathir had seen only one MP charged, jailed and disqualified as a parliamentarian... Lim Guan Eng.

"Of course, Dr Mahathir had recourse to the notorious detention-without-trial Internal Security Act but this is no excuse for the advent under the Najib premiership of a new despotism against democratic liberties through the Sedition Act and other repressive laws," he said in a statement today.

The move, described as Putrajaya's attempt at silencing its political foes, has seen Pakatan leaders being charged with sedition over the last few days.

They are: PKR vice-presidents Rafizi Ramli and N. Surendran, Shah Alam MP and PAS central committee member Khalid Samad, and DAP Seri Delima assemblyman R. S. N. Rayer.

DAP Seputeh MP Teresa Kok and PKR Batu MP Tian Chua are also facing trial for sedition, while former Perak MP and Changkat Jering assemblyman Nizar Jamaluddin was charged with criminal defamation for a statement he had allegedly made two years ago.

Under the Federal Constitution, an elected representative is disqualified from office if fined more than RM2,000 or jailed for a term exceeding one year.

Lim said if found guilty, the nation will face five parliamentary and two state by-elections.

There is also another threat of a by-election in Permatang Pauh, if opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim failed in his appeal at the Federal Court on October 28 and 29 to strike out the Court of Appeal decision which found him guilty of sodomising his former aide. – August 28, 2014.

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