

Putrajaya slammed for Nurul Izzah's sedition arrest
The Malaysian Insider
March 16, 2015

A global human rights group has condemned the arrest of Lembah Pantai MP Nurul Izzah Anwar under the Sedition Act, calling the colonial-era law an "axe" that Putrajaya was using to kill the freedom of speech.

Human Rights Watch deputy Asia director Phil Robertson said the PKR vice-president's arrest showed that Putrajaya "knows no bounds in its efforts to stifle free speech and criminalise dialogue that would be a normal part of political discourse in much of the rest of the world".

He criticised Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his government for shamefully using the Sedition Act like "an axe to hack down opposition politicians, community activists, and any others, who dare speak their minds".

"The Prime Minister needs to recognise that every sedition arrest of an opposition political leader is another step towards the destruction of rights-respecting democracy in Malaysia, and bring this campaign of abuse to an end," Robertson said in a statement.

Nurul Izzah was arrested this afternoon over a speech she made in Parliament, criticising the judiciary over the Federal Court verdict that upheld her father, opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's conviction for sodomy.

Her arrest makes her the latest opposition lawmaker held under the colonial era law.

She had gone to the Dang Wangi police station to keep a prior appointment with the police to give her statement over their investigation into the #KitaLawan rally, which was held in Kuala Lumpur on March 7.

She was detained at the police station and was told that her arrest was under the Sedition Act.

Meanwhile, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng also condemned her arrest, calling it an abuse of power by the police and demanded that she be freed immediately.

He said there was no reason to arrest Nurul Izzah when she was not a robber or a criminal who had committed murder.

"She will not run so why is the police detaining her overnight?" he said in a statement today.

Lim compared how the police was treating Nurul Izzah with how they treated Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister Daruk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who recently called for Chinese traders to be boycotted and alleged that the Chinese oppressed the Malays.

The Bagan MP and Penang chief minister said Ismail was not remanded overnight and the police even said Ismail was a busy man and had no time to be investigated.

"But now, when the Dewan Rakyat is in session, the police have taken Nurul Izzah, an MP elected by the people, into custody under the Sedition Act for a speech she made in the august House.

"DAP will stand by her in solidarity, no matter what happens. We urge the Federal government to stop using the police as its errand boys to arrest, harass and victimise Pakatan Rakyat leaders," Lim said. – March 16, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/putrajaya-slammed-for-nurul-izzahs-sedition-arrest>