

Dr M fears Malaysia turning into a police state with arrest of journalists
The Malaysian Insider
April 14, 2015

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad questioned the rationale behind the arrest of journalists, saying it would only turn Malaysia into a police state.

In a video uploaded on the blog Apanama today, the former prime minister said there was no need for police to nab editors and top executives from The Edge Media Group, which owns The Malaysian Insider (TMI).

"When I heard of the arrests of these reporters for saying... something so-called seditious... I don't think that is the right way to use your power," he said, referring to the arrest of five – one from The Edge Media Group's CEO and four others from TMI by police in late March for sedition.

"Of course, you can say it is not him, it is the police, but we don't want to become a police state," he said.

The five were detained to facilitate investigations into a report published on March 25 which said the Conference of Rulers had rejected a proposal to amend a federal law that would pave the way for hudud to be enforced in Kelantan.

The Keeper of the Rulers' Seal lodged a police report on March 26 to deny that the Conference of Rulers had discussed the matter, adding that it had never issued any statement on hudud in Kelantan.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, however, had defended the controversial Sedition Act, saying that the use of the act was a preventive measure.

Najib reportedly said there was no reason for the government to apologise for using it, despite international criticism against the colonial-era law.

He had also reminded Malaysians not to belittle the efforts of the police force in ensuring public safety.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, when wrapping up the debate on amendments to the Sedition Act 1948 in Parliament last week, had assured that there would be no abuse of power in enforcing the amended act.

He added that cases would only be brought to court once the Attorney-General (A-G) had 90% proof in any case and that was why not all who were arrested and investigated by the police were subsequently charged in court.

On concern that the definitions of seditious acts and "seditious tendencies" in the law were vague and open to abuse by the authorities, Zahid said the definition of "seditious tendencies" was spelled out in the act. – April 14, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/dr-m-fears-malaysia-turning-into-a-police-state-with-arrest-of-journalists>