

Arrest of TMI journalists, execs another black eye for Najib, says DAP
The Malaysian Insider
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DAP today joined the chorus of criticism against the arrest of The Edge publisher Ho Kay Tat, The Malaysian Insider (TMI) chief executive officer Jahabar Sadiq and three of the portals' editors, calling it another black eye for Malaysia.

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said such harsh measures were counter-productive and would only give Malaysia another international black eye for not practising what Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak preached on freedom and moderation.

"DAP calls for the immediate release of all those arrested, including journalists who are trying to report news. If their reporting is wrong, they can be sued for defamation or punished with fines.

"To arrest and put them under remand is an exercise in excessive victimisation, harassment and hounding of journalists, who are doing their job.

"Where is the freedom of the press when those who write negative news about the Barisan Nasional government are punished with unnecessary and unreasonable periods of detention?" he said in a statement today.

Ho and Jahabar were arrested this morning at the Dang Wangi district police headquarters when they presented themselves for questioning over a March 25 report on the Conference of Rulers rejecting a plan to amend a federal law that would allow hudud, or the Islamic penal code, to be enforced in Kelantan.

The article said the proposal to amend the law was in a report by the joint Hudud Technical Committee, which comprised Kelantan religious officials and those from the federal government. The joint committee had prepared the report on the proposed amendments for the rulers to consider at their meeting on March 11, but it did not go through.

Yesterday, TMI managing editor Lionel Morais, Bahasa news editor Amin Iskandar and features and analysis editor Zulkifli Sulong were arrested and held overnight at the police station over the same article.

Today, the magistrates' court rejected a remand order against the three.

Ho and Jahabar are, however, still detained.

They are being investigated under the Sedition Act and the Communication and Multimedia Act 1998.

Lim said as chief minister of Penang, he had been repeatedly slandered by pro-BN media organisations. His recourse was to sue Utusan Malaysia and the New Straits

Times (NST) for defamation.

"Yet no Utusan or NST journalist has had to suffer what TMI has to endure from the harsh tactics of the IGP (Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar)." – March 31, 2015.

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