

Khairuddin, Chang condemn 'frivolous' sabotage charge
Malaysian Insider
Oct 14, 2015

Former Umno branch leader Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan and his lawyer Matthias Chang today slammed Putrajaya for accusing them of attempting to sabotage the economy, saying the charge was "stupid and frivolous in nature".

They said Malaysia was the first country in the world to charge its own citizens of sabotage, adding that people around the globe would be questioning the allegations made against the duo.

"Malaysia, under the Najib-Rosmah regime, is the first country in the world to have made such a charge against us. Not even a banana republic would have the audacity to proffer such a charge against its own citizens," they said in a joint statement posted on Chang's blog today.

"It is clear that they seem to focus only on the gravity of the charge of sabotage and the invocation of Sosma to the extent that they have ignored totally the simple and obvious fact that no one in the entire world can be charged for this offence."

Khairuddin, 53, and Chang, 65, were charged on Monday under Section 124L of the Penal Code with sabotaging the nation's banking and financial services system.

Their case is being investigated as a security offence under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma).

They are accused of committing the offence in France, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Singapore, between June 28 and August 26 this year.

"Datuk Khairuddin and myself were said to have attempted to commit sabotage because I accompanied him as his lawyer to lodge police reports in London, France, Hong Kong, Singapore and lodged sealed documents with the attorney-general's office in Switzerland," Chang said today, referring to the reports made against the controversial 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

He said the substance of the charge against them was that the "lawful acts" of making police reports for a "lawful purpose" – to enable authorities to commence investigations against 1MDB – amounted to an act of sabotage.

"How can a lawyer acting for and on behalf of his client in his professional duty and how can anyone in the course of doing a lawful act (lodging a police report) for a lawful purpose (to enable lawful enforcement to do investigations) and in performance of his public duty, be deemed to have committed an offence of attempting to commit sabotage?

"We leave it to everyone who reads this press statement to draw the necessary conclusion as to the stupidity and frivolous nature of this charge must be obvious to

everyone," Chang said.

Khairuddin and Chang are being held at the Sungai Buloh prison.

Chang, a former political aide to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, was arrested on October 8 at the Dang Wangi district police headquarters when he went to visit Khairuddin, who had been detained two weeks earlier under Sosma.

Six veteran Barisan Nasional leaders led by Dr Mahathir held a press conference on Monday to condemn the use of Sosma against Khairuddin and Chang, who had been critical of 1MDB.

The BN leaders said Sosma, when passed in Parliament, was not meant to be used against those who expressed opinions or beliefs.

However, Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali said yesterday that the use of Sosma was not limited to terrorism or terrorists alone.

He said as a procedural law, Sosma allowed for special measures to be taken to facilitate investigations and prosecution of actions that are security offences. – October 14, 2015.

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