

Sack Shabudin if you're serious about child protection, MP tells Najib
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Batu Kawan MP Kasthuri Patto says rapists should be condemned and not celebrated, especially not in a union of marriage, as she tears into remarks by Tasek Gelugor MP Shabudin Yahya on rape and child marriage.

PETALING JAYA: Umno president Najib Razak should sack Tasek Gelugor MP Shabudin Yahya from the party if he is serious about protecting children against sexual predators, Batu Kawan MP Kasthuri Patto says.

She said in a statement that Najib should not remain silent and protect "this uncouth elected representative".

She was commenting on remarks made by Shabudin, a former shariah court judge, in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday that there was nothing wrong with a girl getting married to her rapist and that it would be good for the girl as she would otherwise face a bleak future.

"The girl might feel safer rather than being just left like that. They can live in peace," Shabudin said, adding that it could be the perfect remedy to social problems.

Since then, people have taken to social media to castigate Shabudin. Even Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Abdul Rahman Dahlan termed his suggestion "abhorrent".

Kasthuri said: "The greatest irony and mockery here is that he said this when he was debating the motion put in by DAP MP for Kulai Teo Nie Ching – in the Sexual Offences Against Children Bill aimed at protecting those below 18 – for the criminalisation of child marriages to be also included in the act."

The publicity secretary of DAP women's wing said Shabudin had "failed miserably" to understand that the social problems he perceived had nothing to do with the probability of rape victims not being able to get themselves a husband, "but the despicable act of rape, which will forever scar a person, let alone a child".

"It is disturbing to note that a leader, a father and probably a grandfather would resort to making such a remark. I would like to ask YB Tasek Gelugor. Would he consent to marrying off his loved ones to their rapists? Since he made the remark with gusto, then he should also answer this question confidently. What if a girl is a victim of gang-rape? What then? Should she also marry them all? And what if it is a boy who was raped? Would Shabudin Yahya also advocate for the boy to marry his rapists?"

“It is dangerously misogynistic and perverse to make a rapist seem like a hero, painting a picture as if he had ‘manned up’ to his act and the punishment is actually on him,” she added.

She warned that his suggestion, if implemented, could lead to serial rapists, or those who intended to rape, forcing themselves on their victims and then marrying them to consummate the marriage, just to bury their crime.

Kasthuri said rapists being allowed to marry their victims should not become the norm, especially since rape cases were “rampant”.

She said: “Two years ago, the Penang Women’s Development Centre (PWDC) reported that a whopping 31,685 rape cases, 42,449 domestic violence cases and 24,939 cases involving outrage of modesty were reported from 2000 to 2013.

“PWDC board of directors member Yap Soo Huey reportedly said that an average of 3,000 rapes were reported in Malaysia each year with only two of 10 cases reported, and that based on the numbers, a girl or a women is being raped somewhere in the country, every 35 minutes.”

Kasthuri slammed Shabudin for taking “pride” in making his “despicable” suggestion and thus “assisting rapists to legalise their impermissible sexual acts on an unwilling victim” instead of calling for harsher penalties against rapists.

“Rapists should be condemned and never celebrated. Definitely not in a union of marriage.”

Kasthuri said she supported Teo’s call for a ban on child marriages to protect children against sexual predators.

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