

Penalties for those found disrespecting the Jalur Gemilang

Astro Awani

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FOUR suspects were arrested for displaying the Jalur Gemilang and the Johor flag upside down at a factory in the Tebrau industrial area.

Background

Johor Chief Police Officer Datuk Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay said the arrest was made after an inspection by the team from the Bandar Dato Onn Police Station at the factory.

Two men, one of whom is a Bangladeshi national, and two women were arrested.

All suspects will be investigated under Section 504 of the Penal Code and if convicted can be jailed for two years or fined or both.

Apart from that, the suspects are also being investigated under Section 14 of the Minor Offenses Act 1955, if convicted can be fined not more than RM100.

Why it matters?

There have been several cases whereby the national flag was found to be displayed upside down. Back in August 2020, a primary school in Kluang was seen flying an inverted national flag at the school compound, claiming it was an honest mistake.

Last year, Toyota Malaysia had to issue a public apology after one of its authorised dealers wrongly displayed the Jalur Gemilang at its establishment.

The Malaysian flag is a symbol of the country's sovereignty and displaying it in the wrong fashion is considered disrespectful and may incite anger amongst Malaysians who had great pride and love for the country.

In many countries, actions that are seen as a desecration of the national flag which includes not only displaying it improperly but also urinating on the flag, stepping on it or even dragging it on the ground, amongst others, is a serious offence.

In countries such as the United States, the national flag can only be displayed upside down to signal "dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property."

While Malaysia does not have a specific law with regards to flag desecration, legal action can be taken against those who disrespected the national flag under the Section 504 of the Penal Code, Section 14 of the Minor Offences 1955 or Section 233 of the Communication and Multimedia Act 1998.

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