

Malaysia: CSOs Stand in Solidarity with Individuals being Silenced or Censored for Dissent

Saturday 27 June 2020, by [Civil society organisations \(CSO\)](#) (Date first published: 19 June 2020).

We, the undersigned civil society organisations (CSO), strongly condemn the continued use of repressive laws as tools of suppression by the new Malaysian government to silence dissent and opposing views.

We note that since the change of government at the federal level in March this year, the State has been increasingly using Section 233 of the Communications and Multimedia Act (CMA) and laws such as the Sedition Act 1948, the Peaceful Assembly Act 2012 and Sections 504 and 505 of the Penal Code to silence freedom of expression, speech and assembly. We find such attempts to be similar to strategic lawsuits against public participation tactics where legal action is brought against human rights defenders with the intention to censor, intimidate and silence critics until they abandon their criticism. This is an especially dangerous form of retaliation from the government because of its potential to create a wider chilling effect on the media, civil society and activists, but disguised as a legitimate lawsuit.

..we call on the government, and its other State apparatus, to:

1. End and refrain from the continued use of these intimidating measures and repressive laws to threaten and silence those exercising their fundamental human rights and speaking on behalf of the public and those marginalised in these very trying times and halt all ongoing investigations;
2. Withdraw all charges against human rights defenders, media and opposition members who are being investigated or charged under the above-mentioned repressive laws;
3. Enact a right to information law and repeal or amend repressive laws such as the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA), the Official Secrets Act (OSA), the Sedition Act and Section 233 of the CMA, so that these laws are not utilised arbitrarily to stifle all manner of speech, and;
4. Create an enabling environment that promotes critical thinking, healthy debates, transparency and accountability from the government as well as measures focused on building the people's trust in the government - not further undermining the people's human rights.

End this culture of bullying and suppression now!

CSOs Stand in Solidarity with Individuals being Silenced or Censored for
Reasons

19 June 2020

The undersigned civil society organisations (CSOs), strongly condemn the continued use of numerous laws as tools of suppression by the new Taliban government to silence dissent and opposing views.

We note that since the change of government in the Afghanistan in 2021, the State has been increasingly using Section 212 of the Communications and Multimedia Act (2002) and Law No. 1 of the National and Provincial Assembly Act 2012 and Sections 104 and 105 of the Penal Code to silence freedom of expression, speech and assembly. The law also attempts to limit or silence lawsuits against public personalities before where legal action is brought against human rights defenders with the intention to silence, intimidate and exploit others with the intention that this is to be especially dangerous form of retaliation from the government towards its political opponents to create a chilling effect on the media, civil society and artists, but also to silence a legitimate dissent.

We have documented the following cases where members of the media, human rights defenders and activists, as well as opposition political members, were brought in for questioning, arrest, charged and arrested for exercising their rights to expression by using official functions or participating in peaceful assemblies through a broad range of laws and their respective. The cases concern the following individuals as there are other individuals who are also being investigated and charged under these laws since the formation of the new Taliban government and due for months ago. Most together, it can be seen as a deliberate and premeditated series of actions intended to silence dissent and opposition to the government.

Individual's name and designation	Alleged offence or wrongdoing	Investigations carried out under which law	Status of investigation
Indira Lakshmi, Co-ordinator, Centre for Independent Journalism	In 10 June, the government arrested Indira Lakshmi for alleged activities in the country.	Section 212 of the Communications and Multimedia Act (2002) and Law No. 1 of the National and Provincial Assembly Act 2012.	In 17 June, the Centre for Independent Journalism is monitoring the case.

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