

Malaysian police question activist lawyer who questioned role of monarchy

Saturday 21 July 2018, by [FOONG Jasmine](#) (Date first published: 11 July 2018).

No institution is immune from criticism in a democracy, said activist lawyer Fadiah Nadwa Fikri, referring to the supportive responses on her recent article questioning the monarchy.



“People keep sharing it (the article) and people keep expressing how they feel the same way, but they cannot express it (in their own words).

“I feel quite relieved to see that people are speaking up because, in a democracy, no one, no institution is immune from criticism,” Fadiah told reporters after being questioned by the cops at the Brickfields police headquarters today.

The lawyer stressed that Malaysians should no longer live in fear of speaking up as everyone has a right to express their opinions and question those in power.

“I want people to understand that we cannot have this fear (of speaking up) anymore because we’ve been told to be silent for so long.

“Everyone has a right to say and to question certain things, particularly power, because power has that tendency to oppress, to marginalise, to silence us.”

Fadiah pointed out that despite the Pakatan Harapan campaign promises to abolish the Sedition Act 1948 and other draconian laws, there has been silence from the Harapan government since it took office.

She said that except for Lembah Pantai MP Fahmi Fadzil, who has informed her that he would raise this issue, Home Minister Muhyiddin Yassin has not announced the government’s plans for the draconian law that is still in place.

“I think that it (the Sedition Act) is used to instill fear. Not everyone will be dragged to the police station but knowing that the law is still there and that someone is being questioned under this law would instill that sense of fear.

“People would censor themselves and that is not healthy for a democracy.

"I think today is proof that it (the Sedition Act) can still be used to stifle dissent and silence people who are critical of the government," she said.

Fadiah was questioned for about an hour by the police today following a report lodged by a student over an article she wrote on Monday [questioning](#) the royal institution.

The lawyer told reporters that she was asked by the police if she was trying to provoke citizens to bring down the monarchy with her article.

She had exercised her right to remain silent throughout the investigation and said that she will provide answers in court should she get charged.

As Fadiah was inside the police headquarters undergoing investigation, present outside the building awaiting the lawyer were Centre to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4) director Cynthia Gabriel, Bersih executive director Yap Swee Seng, Suaram executive director Sevan Doraisamy, PSM committee member S Arutchelvan, as well as artist Fahmi Reza.

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P.S.

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