

URGENT ACTION

POLITICAL CARTOONIST FACES LENGTHY JAIL SENTENCE

Malaysian political cartoonist Zulkiflee Anwar Ulhaque, also known as “Zunar”, is facing nine charges under the draconian Sedition Act for tweets criticizing the judiciary. A court hearing is set for 7 July. If convicted for more than one charge he will face a long term custodial sentence.

Zulkiflee Anwar Ulhaque, also known as “Zunar”, is facing nine simultaneous charges over his tweets on 10 February criticizing the judiciary after opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim was jailed on sodomy charges. A court mention hearing is set for 7 July and if convicted for more than one charge, Zunar is likely to face a long term custodial sentence. He has been charged under the Sedition Act, a colonial-era law that clamps down on freedom of expression under the guise of protecting national security and deterring racial or religious unrest.

He has already been detained twice under this law - in September 2010 for two days, and on 10 February for three days. Five of his cartoon books have been banned by the Malaysian government pm the grounds that their content is "detrimental to public order." His office in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, has been raided several times and thousands of his cartoon books have been confiscated.

The printers, vendors and bookshops around the country which carry his publications have also been harassed. Their premises have been raided and they have been warned by the Malaysian authorities not to print or carry any of Zunar’s books, or their licence will be revoked. Three of Zunar’s assistants were arrested in October 2014 and taken to the police station for selling his books. The webmaster who manages Zunar’s website and online bookshop has also been called in by police for questioning. The online gateway that handled payments for Zunar’s books online was forced to disclose to the police the list of customers who had purchased books through Zunar’s official website, www.zunar.my.

Please write immediately in English, Malaysian or your own language:

- Calling on the Malaysian authorities to drop, immediately, the charges brought against Zunar for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to ensure that Zunar and those working with him are not subjected to any form of restriction or harassment for their peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression;
- Calling on them to repeal the Sedition Act and other laws which restrict the right to freedom of expression, and to comply with international human rights law and standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 JULY 2015 TO:

Prime Minister

Najib Razak
Main Block, Perdana Putra Building,
Federal Government Administrative
Centre, 62502
Putrajaya, Malaysia
Tel: +603 8888 8000
Fax: +603 8888 3444
Email: ppm@pmo.gov.my
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Attorney General

Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail
Block C3, Jabatan Peguam Negara
Persiaran Sultan Sallahuddin Abdul Aziz
Shah, Presint 1, 62000
Putrajaya, Malaysia
Tel: +603 8872 2000
Email: pro@agc.gov.my
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Inspector General of Police

Tan Sri Dato’ Sri Khalid bin Abu Bakar
Ibu Pejabat Polis Diraja Malaysia
Bukit Aman, 50560
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: +603 2266 2222
Fax : +603 2070 7500
Salutation: Dear Inspector General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Sedition Act has also been used to arrest journalists, academics, political activists and lawyers to silence dissent, weaken the opposition and limit public debate on a range of political and economic issues.

Zunar holds the record for having the highest number of sedition charges in Malaysia, with numerous accounts of arrests and intimidation directed at him and the people he was working with, as follows:

Zunar's office was raided by the authorities in September 2009. Five hundred copies of his book *Gedung Kartun* were confiscated under the Printing Presses and Publications Act.

In July 2010, under the Printing Presses and Publications Act, five of Zunar's books: *Perak Darul Kartun*, *1 Funny Malaysia*, *Isu Dalam Kartun* Vols.1, 2, and 3 – were banned by the Home Minister for having content that is "detrimental to public order."

Zunar was detained on 24 September 2010 and locked up for two days after the publication of his book *Cartoon-O-Phobia*, under the Sedition Act.

Three of Zunar's assistants were arrested on 6 November 2014 and taken to the police station for selling his cartoon books, under the Sedition Act, but were later released on bail.

The webmaster who manages Zunar's website and online bookstore was called in by the police for questioning under the Sedition Act on 16 November.

Two days later, the police asked the online payment gateway that handles Zunar's book transactions to disclose the list of customers who have purchased his books through his official website www.zunar.my. The company had no choice but to disclose the requested information under the Sedition Act.

Zunar was brought in for questioning at the Dang Wangi Police Station in Kuala Lumpur two days after that, under their "Classified Crime Section" on the basis of three different laws: Printing Presses and Publications Act, the Sedition Act and Penal Code.

His office was raided on 28 January 2015, while he was on a speaking tour stop in London. More than 150 books were confiscated, under the Printing Presses and Publications Act, Sedition Act, and Penal Code.

Zunar was detained and locked up under the Sedition Act on 10 February 2015. He was accused of having tweeted seditious comments in relation to the Federal Court's decision which upheld the conviction of opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim for sodomy. The police opened up two separate investigations on Zunar under the Sedition Act. One investigation is regarding his tweet criticising the judiciary after Anwar Ibrahim's sodomy sentence, the other investigation concerns his cartoon books *Pirates of The Carry-BN* and *Conspiracy to Imprison Anwar*.

Hundreds of copies of the book *ROS in Kangkong Land* were confiscated by the police from the printer's lorry on 14 February, on the way to the book's launching venue.

More than 20 policemen raided Zunar's launching event in Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur on 28 February, and threatened to detain him and confiscate his book *ROS in Kangkong Land* if he proceeded with the event. Zunar had to cancel it.

Name: Zulkiflee Anwar Ulhaque a.k.a. "Zunar"

Gender m/f: m

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