

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Halt the Intimidation Tactics against Media**

We, the undersigned organisations and individuals, condemn the [recent seizure of Malaysiakini's laptop](#) and the authorities' demand for access to the media organisation's content management system (CMS). Malaysiakini has been informed that failure to comply would constitute an offense. This can be seen as an act of coercion that raises serious questions about media freedom and the rule of law in Malaysia.

These actions, reportedly to aid investigations involving former minister Khairy Jamaluddin, represent a dangerous overreach of authority. Rather than addressing the root issues of the alleged defamation through effective investigation and appropriate legal channels, the authorities seem to target a media organisation which had reported on the alleged defamatory statement by Khairy Jamaluddin. This advances a chilling trend of weaponizing legal measures to stifle critical reporting, turning journalists into 'witnesses' while threatening their independence and journalistic confidentiality.

The ongoing investigation against Khairy Jamaluddin is a straightforward case and we strongly believe that the seizure of newsroom equipment and demands for access to sensitive and confidential data/information, which may include information on journalistic sources, while investigating a third party is disproportionate, unnecessary, and wholly inconsistent with the principles of free and independent media. Such measures amount to blatant intimidation tactics aimed at silencing critical reporting and restricting the media's ability to perform its essential role in informing the public and holding power to account. These actions undermine the foundation of democracy and are reminiscent of authoritarian practices, not those of a modern democratic state.

**We strongly urge the police and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) to immediately halt these draconian measures and respect the fundamental right to media freedom.** Journalists must be free from intimidation, harassment, and the threat of criminalization for carrying out their professional duties. The sanctity of the media as the fourth estate must be preserved to ensure transparency, accountability, and the health of Malaysia's democracy.

**We further demand that the government take all necessary steps to safeguard the independence and safety of media practitioners. A free press is not a privilege, but a pillar of democracy, and any attack on it violates the rights of all in Malaysia.**

**Prepared and endorsed by:**

**Organisations:**

- 1) Gerakan Media Merdeka (GERAMM)
- 2) Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ)
- 3) National Union of Journalists Malaysia (NUJM)
- 4) Twentytwo13
- 5) Persatuan Wartawan Malaysia (PWM)

**Individuals:**

- 1) S.S. Yoga (freelance journalist)
- 2) Dr G Manimaran
- 3) Norman Goh (journalist)
- 4) Tan Sri Johan Jaaffar (writer and National Journalism Laureate)
- 5) Datuk Abdul Kadir Jasin (writer)
- 6) Dato Hussamuddin Yaacub (media owner)
- 7) Datuk Zakaria A Wahab (freelance journalist and writer)
- 8) Datuk Dr Chamil Wariya (Columnist and Author)

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