

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/malaysia-call-for-return-of-cartoon-books-04-02-2015,47556.html>

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Asia - Malaysia

Judicial persecution

## Call for return of cartoon books seized in raid

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Reporters Without Borders condemns the government's renewed harassment of the cartoonist Zulkiflee Anwar Alhaque (better known by the pen-name of Zunar) and demands the return of the collections of his cartoons that police seized during a raid on his Kuala Lumpur office on 28 January.

The raid was carried out by members of the Criminal Investigation Department led by Assistant Superintendent Lim Ah Heng, who interrogated **Zunar's** employees and seized more than 150 copies of two of his books. They did not show any warrant but cited the [Sedition Act](#), a draconian law that has repeatedly been used to prosecute journalists and bloggers.

The titles of the two books are "Conspiracy to Imprison Anwar" and "Pirates of the Carry BN." The first refers to the sodomy charges brought against opposition leader Anwar bin Ibrahim in 2008 after he announced his intention to run for parliament. The second alludes to Barisan National, the political coalition led by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, a frequent target of Zunar's criticism.

*"This latest raid and confiscation of Zunar's work constitutes new evidence of the judicial persecution to which this journalist is subjected,"* said Benjamin Ismail, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Asia-Pacific desk.

*"If people such as the prime minister or other government officials have something to say about Zunar's cartoons, they can use the media to express their views. And if they think they have been defamed, they can file a civil lawsuit. But in that case, they will have to prove that Zunar was not just trying to make people laugh."*

Either way, use of criminal laws is unwarranted and out of all proportion. Reporters Without Borders calls for an immediate end to the judicial proceedings against Zunar and to the harassment of both him and his employees.

This is not the first police raid on Zunar's offices. Several hundred copies of his books were seized in 2009 and 2010.

After an earlier collection of his cartoons called "Cartoon-o-phobia" was published, he was arrested on 24 September 2010 and held for two days, and all copies of his books were seized.

He responded by filing a complaint accusing the authorities of misusing of the Sedition Act. But a high court [ruled against him in July 2012](#), effectively ratifying the government's position that the publication of political cartoons was a crime. Zunar cannot organize an exhibition of his cartoons in his country.

Malaysia is ranked 147th out of 180 countries in the [2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

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