

Academics in Yogyakarta Urge Resignation of Constitutional Court Chief

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Related to violations of codes of ethics done by Chief of Constitutional Court, Arief Hidayat, academics in Yogyakarta have urged his resignation.

This emerged in a discussion at the UGM Centre for Anti-corruption Studies (PUKAT) on Monday (5/2).

"Now we're facing a situation where one who is at the top of the honourable institution cannot be made a good reference, I think he has even betrayed the mandate granted upon him. In my opinion it is no longer appropriate for him (to take that job)," said Dean of Faculty of Law GM, Prof. Dr. Sigit Riyanto, S.H., LL.M.

Researcher from PUKAT UGM, Dr. Zainal Arifin Mochtar, S.H., LL.M., similarly said that as the Chief of the Constitutional Court, Arief had violated the principles contained in the Court's law. This might damage the public trust towards the Court's verdicts.



"This is not just about Arief, but the future of the Constitutional Court. The Court is our hope amidst the difficulties for the law to prevail above political interests. When we let politics conquer the law, it's over," he said.

On 16 January 2018, the Board of Ethics of Constitutional Court warned Arief after it was proven that he had met politicians and parliamentarians back in November 2017, presumably related to the election of judges from Parliament as well as Chief of the Court. He had also been sanctioned due to allegations of having given recommendation to junior judges of Attorney's General Office related to his member of family who was also a judge.

More concerns on this issue were raised by Director of Centre for Human Rights Studies of Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII), Eko Riyadi, who said that the violation showed the bad mentality that ought not to be owned by a constitutional judge.

"If there is a constitutional judge who has bad mentality, even doing lobbying on verdicts, he ought to step down because this would not just harm the COurt but also the nation. Either the Chief has to step down or be dismissed," said Eko.

Through this movement, he said, academics in legal discipline were trying to push change in Indonesian law. It is expected that in the future this kind of movement is no longer needed because state officials have already the willingness to step down by themselves if proven doing violations.

Dean of Faculty of Law of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY), Dr. Trisno Raharjo, S.H.,M.Hum., also expressed hopes that Arief should act like a statesman by resigning from his job.

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