

# PRESS RELEASE

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### **Fahmi Reza sells NFT in defence of satire and to donate to legal aid**

Political graphic designer, Fahmi Reza, has launched a digital NFT artwork titled 'Monyet Istana' to protest the Malaysian government's crackdown on his satirical poster depicting a monkey dressed in royal regalia. The NFT has raised over RM13,000 within the first hour since its release on a dedicated website, MonyetIstana.com. All proceeds from the sale will be donated to a freedom of expression legal defence fund.

Fahmi's satirical monkey artwork was created as a response to another satirical artwork owned and shared on social media by Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah of Selangor that depicted MPs as monkeys and frogs. The NFT sale comes after Fahmi Reza was arrested and placed in lock-up for two days over his 'Monyet Istana' artwork that was posted on his social media. He is being investigated under the Sedition Act, and Section 233 of the Communications and Multimedia Act (CMA). If convicted, he faces a fine of up to RM 100,000 and a two-year prison sentence.

Known for his tongue-in-cheek and provocative humour, Fahmi Reza's latest work addresses the need to defend political satire as a fundamental democratic right.

The NFT fundraiser, aimed at helping others in need of legal defence funds, intends to mimic the actions of the Selangor Sultan who plans to auction off the painting for charity one day.

"The Monyet Istana NFT is a symbolic act of protest against the government for continuously abusing the Sedition Act, and Section 233 of the CMA, as a political tool to suppress any forms of satire, comment, or criticism levelled against the monarchy and the royal families, and a symbolic act to defend our right to freedom of expression, and our right to criticise the people in power using art and satire.

In a country where artists and satirists have been censored, arrested and incarcerated for their art, it is important that this vital form of artistic expression - parody and satire as a form of political protest - is continued to be practised and defended at all costs.", he says.

Fahmi Reza is also facing two charges for posting satirical artworks that criticised authorities on social media.

The open edition NFT is open for sale to the public for 48 hours only from 27 to 29 April, 9pm, for 0.05 BNB (cryptocurrency) or approximately MYR 85 at MonyetIstana.com. Fahmi Reza will not be taking a single cent from the sales.

#END