

**May 23, 2013**

**To all editors.**

### **PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemns the attack on reporters by an unruly group, believed to be sent to disrupt the vigil attended by more than 100 non-governmental organisation (NGO) members, students, social activists and several state Pakatan Rakyat leaders in Penang yesterday.

The candlelight vigil held in Esplanade was to show solidarity for student activist Adam Adli Abdul Halim who was arrested on Saturday (May 18) for alleged offences under the Sedition Act.

Oriental Daily's reporter Ooi Chun Nam and Sin Chew Daily reporter Cheah Chin Liang were assaulted by the group when they tried to help vigil organiser Sean Ho from being run over by an attacker on a motorcycle. They have since lodged a police report.

In a similar gathering on Monday at the University Sains Malaysia's Sungai Dua, two more journalists, Low Chia Ming of Malaysikini and Nanyang Siang Pau's Bryan Lai Thiem Wah were also attacked and hit on their arms by an unruly group while they were taking photographs.

NUJ strongly urge the police to investigate and take prompt action against these group of troublemakers as there was absolutely no reason for them to physically harm the journalists.

The reporters were assigned to cover the event and the group(s) could have surely identified them as members of the press on duty.

We will not condone such act of violence and inflicting injuries on journalists as these incidents would create a unhealthy trend where media workers are attacked while carrying out their public duty.

Nobody can take the law into his or her own hands. As working journalists covering such social events, they are called to uphold their professional duties. These kinds of act would interfere with press freedom, preventing them from carrying out their duties effectively.

We also call on reporters and photographers especially NUJ members, covering possible "social unrests" to adhere to guidelines in our safety handbook.

Those assigned to cover such event have to get prepared for any eventuality and the book provides key guidance on the do's and don'ts.



**SCHAVE JEROME DE ROZARIO**  
NUJ General Secretary