

Attempted murder or arson? Ball in cops' court over Molotov cocktail attack on Beruas MP Ngeh's home, lawyers say



On January 10, 2024, three cars parked in the porch of Ngeh's house were damaged after a Molotov cocktail was thrown into the house compound, with the Fire and Rescue Department saying that the incident happened at around 3am. — Picture by Farhan Najib

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By Zaf Seraj

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 16 — The police will investigate the Molotov cocktail attack against Beruas MP Datuk Ngeh Koo Ham's home in Perak as they deem fit even when it was opened under suspicion of arson, several lawyers have told *Malay Mail*.

Although Bukit Gelugor MP Ramkarpal Singh has suggested that the suspects be investigated for attempted murder, the lawyers said the criminal charge will be revised accordingly once the investigation has been completed.

"That classification is just an initial classification. They will then begin investigating, and when they investigate, they will investigate from all angles," lawyer Datuk Geethan Ram Vincent told *Malay Mail*.

"If the evidence points towards attempted murder, then they will eventually refer charges under attempted murder. It matters not what the classification is.

"Will they not look at certain angles because it is not classified? No," Geethan asserted.

Agreeing with Geethan, lawyer Siti Summaiya Ahmad Jaafar also said that if the investigations and forensics report point towards something more, the perpetrators may be charged accordingly.

"For example, a person is charged with murder. When they do more investigation, they find out that he kidnapped the victim.

"Then, he would be charged for kidnapping as well," she explained.

Former Malaysian Bar president Salim Bashir Bhaskaran assured the public that the police have the skill, knowledge, and expertise to conduct investigations effectively and that they can determine whether an act makes up the ingredients of a specific offence after performing the investigation.

"Eventually if one gets charged for an offence, the prosecution bears the burden to prove a case based on investigations," he said.

Last week, Ramkarpal said the police should investigate the attack at Ngeh's Ayer Tawar house in Perak under Section 307 of the Penal Code for attempted murder since it was done while he and his family were asleep.

Ramkarpal said Ngeh was alerted of the arson attack by a couple who rang his house bell, and that he was then able to bring himself and his family to safety.

Perak police chief Datuk Seri Mohd Yusri Hassan Basri said the arson case was being investigated under the Penal Code's Section 435 for causing mischief by fire or explosive substance with intent to cause damage and that a man was [arrested and remanded for investigations](#) after seven individuals were questioned.

On January 10, three cars parked on the porch of Beruas MP's house were damaged after a Molotov cocktail was thrown into the house compound, with the Fire and Rescue Department saying that the incident happened at around three o'clock in the morning.

A Mercedes E300 with 80 per cent of the vehicle damaged, while a Honda CRV and a Toyota Hilux both had about 5 per cent damage, and the porch ceiling and garage roof had about 10 per cent damage.

Police said that the suspect was not a [member](#) of any political party, and [tested negative](#) for drugs.

Ngeh has since [forgiven](#) the perpetrator and suggested the individual could have been instigated by others into committing the crime.

He said he strongly suspects the incident to be linked to his remark last month suggesting that non-Muslim legal experts be included in the committee to study the conflicts between Shariah laws and the Federal Constitution, which he said had been distorted by Islamist party PAS and its ally Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia.