

Perkasa ready to counter Bersih rally
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Right-wing Malay rights group Perkasa has warned that it will hold a counter-protest to prevent the planned Bersih 2.0 rally from "causing trouble".

Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali (extreme left in photo) said they are ready to "fight to the end" (lawan habis-habisan) to stop the rally if the organisers insist on taking to the streets of Kuala Lumpur on July 9.

"(If they proceed) there will be a clash (pertembungan). If that happens, it is for the better," he told a press conference in the Parliament lobby.

Ibrahim, the Independent MP for Pasir Mas, said Perkasa will march against the Bersih 2.0 demonstrators to show that not all Malaysians agree with the latter's claims about 'dirty' elections.

He also stressed that his NGO is acting in the interests of democracy.

"I cannot imagine, when they bring a big crowd and start throwing stones, burning cars...Perkasa will go down to make sure we stop (the Bersih rally)," he said.

Looking back at his recent controversial "holy war" call against the alleged push for a Christian state by Christian leaders, Ibrahim said it is only right to invoke the call to jihad to protect public security.

"Jihad is to prevent bad things from happening... I have every right to stop (the rally)."

Ibrahim declined to say how many Perkasa members he expects to turn up, though he implied that it could be more than the Bersih demonstrators.

"Malaysia has around 27 million people. Say Bersih gets around 300,000, there are still 26 million more Malaysians," he quipped.

'Pre-emptive strike'

At the press conference, Bayan Baru MP Zahrain Hashim said the caucus of independent MPs has filed an emergency motion to get the House to debate the upcoming Bersih rally.

He said it is important for Parliament to debate the issue, as the independent caucus believes it is necessary for the authorities to take pre-emptive measures to stop the rally.

"We disagree with the rally on the ground that street demonstrations are unhealthy and pose a threat to national security.

"This should be discussed in Parliament and a decision should be made to urge the home minister to launch a pre-emptive strike to stop the event."

Zahrain dismissed the argument by the Bersih 2.0 organisers that public rallies are part of the democratic process, saying it is just an excuse they use to "cari pasal" (look for trouble).

"Democracy to who? How do we measure their democracy? To me, this (rally) is looking for trouble, and to instigate a problematic scenario.

"Once they described it as a rally akin to Egypt. What does that mean? They have bad intentions... This is not the democracy we are looking for."

Kulim Bandar Baru MP Zulkifli Nordin claimed that the Bersih rally is merely a ploy to take attention off

PKR de facto chief Anwar Ibrahim and his on-going sodomy trial.

Saying that there is no justification to hold a massive demonstration against perceived electoral misconduct, Zulkifli stressed that the organisers have numerous options to hold the rally in a closed venue but have chosen instead to create a public spectacle.

"If the elections were dirty, they still got five states (in 2008) and they campaign day and night. They also have been moving voters from one place to another... If you want to give a memorandum to the Agong, make an appointment.

"This is a specific agenda by someone who is stuck and desperate," he said, referring to Anwar.

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