

Khairy rebuffs ex-boss, July 9 march to continue
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Despite warning by Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein over the planned rally next month, Umno Youth is still persisting with their own march.

In a strongly-worded but brief text message statement sent to Malaysiakini, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar threw caution to the winds, saying that it was a decision made unanimously by the movement.

"We will continue with our rally. This was a unanimous decision made by the youth exco yesterday. Not my unilateral decision," he said in an immediate reaction.

Hishammuddin, who was also Khairy's predecessor in the party, had earlier today warned the latter that he have to face the consequences if Umno Youth were to persist with the march.

"It doesn't matter that I'm a former youth chief or not, the (Umno) Youth will have to face whatever the consequences of the action as I had to when I was the Youth head," he was have reported to have said, adding that the rally is "against the law".

'Hisham can warn us all he wants'

To that, Khairy poured cold water to the threats of police action against him, saying that they are ready for the aftermath.

"My Pemuda and I are ready to face whatever consequences. Hishammuddin can warn us all he wants.

"This is a new Malaysia. We have a right to assembly, guaranteed by the constitution. Umno Youth will be marching on July 9. And that's that," he said.

The July 9 slot was initially slotted for a planned massive rally in Kuala Lumpur by the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (Bersih 2.0) to urge for electoral reforms and to hand over a petition to Istana Negara.

Malay rights NGO Perkasa later announced that they would hold a counter-protest to prevent the Bersih 2.0 supporters from 'causing trouble', with its president Ibrahim Ali promising that Perkasa is ready to "fight to the end" when they clash.

But to the surprise of many, Umno Youth decided to up the ante by announcing that they will also be marching to the Istana Negara at the same time in a show of support for the current electoral system.

"We feel strongly that we need to march to show that the voice of the people is not monopolised by the opposition," added Khairy today.