

Anwar: Bersih remark taken out of context
Malaysiakini.com
June 20, 2011

After being ticked off for a remark attributed to him yesterday, Anwar Ibrahim has claimed that his words were taken out of context over the July 9 rally for election reform.

He was at the election convention front referring to reports that he would ask Bersih 2.0 chairperson S Ambiga to "call off the rally" if Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak can "promise free and fair elections tomorrow".

At the Bersih 2.0 launch later that day, Ambiga had retorted that it was not Anwar's place to stop the people's demand for a fair and free electoral process, and said the rally would proceed as planned.

Today, Anwar told reporters at the Parliament lobby: "I agree with her. Clearly there is some misunderstanding, I support Ambiga's position that the Bersih rally must continue.

"What I said, which was clearly taken out of context, was this: had the election or electoral process been fair and just and clean, (there is) clearly no need for Bersih."

Anwar said the government's failure in undertaking reforms reflects the "utter failure of the administration".

No explanation

Asked to explain how his statement was taken out of context, Anwar evaded a direct answer.

"It's okay. I mean, I'm a democrat, in a way it's good that you (media can) create a situation (where) people can disagree with me and I still support them," he said.

"I'm not a Umno leader. We have Ambiga (left) disputing my statement and what's my response? I support her position.

"If I'm asked to clarify, let me say this. I merely said, had the electoral process been fair, just and clean, there is no need for Bersih.

"Ambiga's response is that we will proceed. Of course we will proceed. In fact, I've said that I will attend and participate."