

**DAP questions 'political activity' ban ahead of Bersih
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Negeri Sembilan DAP questioned a police advisory not to hold political activities in the state during the week leading up to the planned Bersih 2.0 mega rally on July 9.

"If they really do not allow political activity, then they should also prohibit any visits and speeches by the prime minister and his deputy," state publicity secretary Teo Kok Seong told Malaysiakini when contacted yesterday.

Teo (left), who is also Bahau state assemblyperson, related how one of the party's branch leaders in Jelebu went to see the police to seek a permit to hold a dinner on June 30.

He claimed that the police then advised the branch leader to postpone the event.

According to Teo, police told the DAP leader that orders came from federal police headquarters Bukit Aman on Tuesday not to allow political activities from June 21 to July 10.

Attempts to contact the Jelebu police chief and deputy inspector-general of police for comment failed to elicit a response.

The dinner has been a traditional annual event for the Titi DAP branch located in the Jelebu district. However, Teo insisted that the branch will proceed with the dinner which is expected to see the gathering of some 700 party members.

'Dinner to proceed'

"We are going to proceed, furthermore it is an indoor event. We have been holding it every year, without problems.

"We have already paid for everything, the tickets for the dinner are also sold out, we have to go on, unless the PDRM wants to refund us," Teo said.

The state DAP publicity director complained that even if the police advisory is put in place to check any activity related to the Bersih rally, it is unfair for them to be fettered by it.

"The Bersih rally is scheduled for July 9, while our event is on June 30, and Jelebu is so far away from Kuala Lumpur," he said.

Meanwhile, Bersih committee member Maria Chin Abdullah, when contacted, said that the NGO has not yet confirmed any activities in Negeri Sembilan nor has she heard of the imposition of any such restrictions.

But she stressed that Bersih is an NGO without political affiliations and thus should not be affected by any ban on "political activities".

However, she hit out that such restrictions by police, saying it is inappropriate as it impinges upon the public's constitutional rights.

"Their role and responsibility is to facilitate traffic flow and ensure that there are no disturbances, not to threaten people. We are only exercising our right to public assembly as prescribed in the constitution" she said.

The electoral reform advocacy group plans to hold a massive rally in Kuala Lumpur on July 9 to press for electoral reforms. In the run-up to which, a series of road shows and gatherings are planned.

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