

Deputy ministers agree to holding rally in stadium
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The decision made by the organisers of the Saturday rally to hold the gathering in a stadium has received positive reactions from several deputy ministers.

Deputy Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing Minister M Saravanan said although the organisers had agreed to hold the gathering in a stadium, security aspect should be given a priority.

"I agree with Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's proposal that the gathering should be held in a peaceful manner because not everyone is in support of street demonstrations.

"The exception (given to the organisers) proved that the government had always given fair opportunity for them to hold a gathering even without knowing their true intentions," he told Bernama in Kuala Lumpur today.

Yesterday, chairperson of the illegal rally organising committee S Ambiga had an audience with Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin at the Istana Negara.

At a press conference today, Ambiga announced that the organisers were planning to hold the gathering at the Merdeka Stadium, but they had yet to get a police permit for the purpose.

Meanwhile, Deputy Information Communication and Culture Minister Maglin Dennis D'Cruz described the organisers' decision to hold the gathering in a stadium as the best decision because their initial plan to hold street demonstrations had caused concern among members of the public.

"We will not stand in their way if they want to hold the gathering in a stadium, as long as it is a peaceful gathering and will not trouble the public.

"This is because many police report had been lodged and I was made to understand that this month alone, we have suffered losses of RM1.8 billion in taxi, hotel and restaurant operations," he said.

D'Cruz also said that the handing over of the memorandum to Tuanku Mizan should be made in a professional and courteous manner as those involved were highly-educated individuals.

Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department SK Devamany also said that it was impossible to deny the existence of certain quarters who would oppose the decision made by the ruling party of the country, but all protests should be made through legal channels.

"There is no need for us to challenge each other. If they want to voice out their satisfaction, all quarters should take note of the issue.

"Nevertheless, I would like to thank the chairperson (Ambiga) for listening to Tuanku Mizan's words and her concern about public sensitivity," he added.

- Bernama