

**PM grateful Bersih rally did no serious harm**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**July 9, 2011**

Najib Razak said he is grateful that the rally in Kuala Lumpur today did no serious harm to people and property.

The prime minister said he was also thankful that the majority of Malaysians, especially in the federal capital and the rest of the Klang Valley, did not support the street demonstration.

He said the people who had stayed away from the rally were peace-loving Malaysians and they had heeded the advice of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the Selangor sultan and the government.

"I also wish to congratulate the security forces, especially the police, who dispersed the gathering in the best manner possible and I hope that what happened today would be a lesson to Malaysians," he told reporters in Kuala Terengganu.

Najib said the government realised that a street demonstration would inconvenience the people and disrupt public order, and presented an alternative to the planners of the illegal assembly.

"We offered a stadium for the gathering to be held, but unfortunately, to my deep regret, they rejected the offer.

"This shows that their intention was to get the widest publicity possible. That was why they wanted to march in the centre of the city. They wanted to give the impression that Malaysia had no political stability and exploit the issue as much as possible," Najib said.

If their demand was indeed for fair and clean elections, the prime minister said, then it differed not at all from what the government wanted.

**Baseless rumours**

Among the others arrested were the organiser of the Bersih 2.0 illegal rally S Ambiga, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang, PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu, PKR vice-presidents Fuziah Salleh and Tian Chua and two vice-presidents of PAS, Mahfuz Omar and Salahuddin Ayub.

The prime minister said he hoped that those involved realise that Malaysians did not like street demonstrations as there were many other ways to voice their demands.

Not dismissing the possibility that the arrests of the opposition leaders would be used to tarnish the image of the police, Najib said: "We expect this will be made an issue. That is why they wanted to have a confrontation with the police, so that they can say the police are cruel and brutal."

Certain media, particularly that of the opposition would take advantage of the situation to blow up the arrests and the illegal demonstrations to show the people they had wide support when in fact the number of demonstrators did not even reach 10,000, he said.

Commenting on the spread of an SMS stating Parliament would be dissolved on Monday purportedly issued by the Bernama, Najib said it was an irresponsible action purposely done to create confusion among the people.

"This is normal in a situation like this (when illegal demonstrations are held) and during elections, the people must understand that these are baseless rumours and are also spread through e-mail and social websites," he said.

Bernama today had denied that it had sent the SMS on the dissolution of Parliament.

### **Rally politically-motivated**

"We have long practised such elections. At the same time, the Election Commission is prepared to make improvements in disputed areas," Najib said.

"For example, if they suspect that there are phantom voters, the EC will implement a biometric system to ensure that there are no phantom voters at all. Other matters can also be discussed with the EC and the government," he said.

Najib said the organisers had discarded their election-related slogans in favour of catch phrases used by the reformasi group (started by opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim).

"This is one proof that they are politically motivated and that their demands for electoral reforms were an excuse to hold an illegal assembly," Najib added.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/169430>