

DAP: Najib hits 'new low' with Bersih fiasco
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Lim Kit Siang said the Umno-organised 'special information briefing' yesterday was a clear sign that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak was "in deep political trouble" over the "gross mishandling" of last Saturday's Bersih 2.0 rally in Kuala Lumpur.

Calling Najib the biggest casualty of the rally, that Bersih claimed had drawn up to 50,000 to the streets to demand free and fair elections, Lim cited the PM's damage control measures yesterday in the special briefing and Najib's walkabout in the city as signs that the premier's credibility had hit a "new low".

"(Najib's) unannounced walkabout in Kuala Lumpur a day after 709 reminds one of (former US President George W) Bush's unannounced one-day visit to Baghdad after the United States bomb-out of Iraq!" Lim said.

In Najib's briefing at PWTC yesterday morning to 6,000 Umno and Umno-linked NGOs and heads of government-linked companies, the PM downplayed the Bersih show of strength, and called on the "silent majority" to express their anti-Bersih sentiments in cyberspace.

Lim, in a statement today, noted that the silent majority had indeed expressed their views, "in the most viral phenomenon on Malaysian cyberspace, declaring their denunciation of the Najib crackdown on the 709 Bersih 2.0 rally".

Najib's administration is receiving severe criticism for its heavy-handed police action against the peaceful Bersih rally, firing tear gas and chemically-laced water on the crowds.

In what Lim called "the largest mass arrests in Malaysian history", the official police figure for the arrests is 1,697.

Najib endorses his own illegal rally?

Meanwhile, PAS Youth hit out at Najib for what it said amounted to an admission that the Umno Youth anti-Bersih rally had his blessings, made during the same briefing.

"Pas Youth is surprised at Umno president Najib Razak's admission in his speech yesterday, recognising the setting up of the counter-rally 'Patriot' by Youth chief Khairy Jamaludin, even though Hishammuddin Hussien and Nazri Aziz had both labelled the group illegal," PAS Youth vice-chief Raja Ahmad Al-hiss said in a statement.

In brushing off Bersih's claim of a 50,000 turnout at the rally, the PM had let slip that Umno could have managed a larger turnout if it wanted, apparently referring to Umno Youth's counter-rally that eventually fizzled out.

"This (morning's turnout) is but a fraction of our strength. Six thousand people, we managed to call out on such short notice, and they represent hundreds of thousands more.

"Umno alone has three million members, and this is not including other NGOs. If we give the signal to do something, they are willing," Najib was reported saying.

Raja Ahmad said this was not surprising, and recalled similarities with the pre-Operasi Lalang rally led by Najib as the then Umno Youth chief in 1987.

"In the end, other groups (at the time) were arrested and charged, while Najib walked free, just like with the Patriot group now.

“It is obvious to the rakyat that Najib endorses attempts to create chaos that will give the police an excuse to take action on the Bersih 2.0 supporters,” he added.

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