

Mat rempit accuse Penang CM of racism
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About 200 mat rempit held a noisy demonstration at the historic Clock Tower near the Penang state legislative assembly building today, demanding a 'racing track' for their use.

The group, led by Shahabuddin Ahmad - a representative of Pertubuhan Islam Gabungan Amal - lined the area with their motorcycles about 1pm and honked noisily for about 15 minutes before the police dispersed them.

NONETheir mission appeared political as most of the bikers were wearing yellow T-shirts with the words 'LGE racist' - a reference to Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng - and 'Save Penang'.

They also unfurled banners reading Mahu litar lumba (We want a racing track).

Five protestors, including Shahabuddin, were detained by the police who had been trailing some members of the group from Komtar, the state's administrative building.

It is learnt that the mat rempit had proceeded from Penang Road to the state legislative assembly building along Light Street.

During the arrests, a minor scuffle broke out between the police and several protestors who were shouting. One threw his helmet on the ground.

azlanParts of the Komtar building had earlier been defaced with graffiti reading Guan Eng tipu Melayu (Guan Eng has lied to the Malays), but it is not known if the group was behind this.

Georgetown OCPD Gan Kon Meng said the group had planned to hand a memorandum to Lim over several issues affecting them.

"We allowed them to submit the memorandum because we are a democracy. But if (any gathering) is not peaceful, it can create chaos and cause loss of property," Gan said.

Those held will be investigated for illegal assembly under Section 27(5) of the Police Act.

Told of complaints of police violence during the arrest, he said it was probably because the protestors had resisted enforcement action.

'Political agenda'

NONEHowever, Komtar assemblyperson and Lim's political secretary Ng Wei Aik (right) was upset with Gan for not doing his work professionally.

Ng said Gan should explain why he allowed the 'illegal' protest when this was clearly "a politically-oriented rally".

"Asking for a racing track was merely an excuse. I do not think it is related. All demonstrations (here) are easily linked to Umno," he alleged.

"Someone sold Umno's agenda to them. If it is not political, why do they say 'LGE racist,' when mat rempit are only mostly interested in racing?"

In a related development, Teluk Bahang assemblyperson Dr Helmi Yahya denied that Umno is in any way connected to the mat rempit.

He said he had merely been invited to launch Pertubuhan Islam Gabungan Amal at Universiti Sains Malaysia in July, and had advised them to organise charity programmes for the benefit of the people.

Helmi declined to comment on the protest, saying he had not witnessed the incident.

"At that time, I was resting. When I came to know about the protest, it was already over," added the former Penang deputy chief minister.

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