

### **Third PKR ceramah disrupted in two weeks**

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PKR ceramahs in Umno strongholds continue to face hostility. This time, PKR's vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar and communications director Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad were the ones affected by the unruly welcome.

The ceramah which took place at Felda Lepar Hilir 1 in Gambang, Pahang last night was disrupted purportedly by local Umno leaders, who set up loudspeakers near the coffeeshop where Nurul Izzah and Nik Nazmi were speaking.

"Several youths tried to assault Nurul Izzah at our ceramah... Nurul Izzah and I were escorted by the Felda auxiliary police out of the Felda scheme to avoid them," Nik Nazmi told Malaysiakini today.

The plantation scheme is located under the Paya Besar parliamentary seat held by Umno's Abdul Manan Ismail.

According to him, the group had set up loudspeakers in the vicinity of the coffeeshop where they were scheduled to speak from 9pm to midnight.

"The local PKR leaders got a the police approval for us to speak... but before the event even began they received threatening SMSes wanting them to cancel the ceramah," said Nik Nazmi.

"I was speaking for about 20 to 30 minutes, and throughout they were blasting Umno songs and music, trying to distract the crowd.

"At first, we thought it was a concert or something, later we found out that they had organised a karaoke session," he recounted.

Matters got out of hand when Nurul Izzah started speaking, said Nik Nazmi, as several people from the group barged into the scene of the ceramah, shouting verbal abuse at her.

"They wanted us to leave. They called us outsiders.

"We had to usher Nurul inside the coffeeshop to let the situation cool, but it got out of hand so we left the place," he said.

Cops face vulgarities

Nik Nazmi added that the group had also shouted vulgarities at the police for providing the PKR duo with protection.

"As we were leaving, they were still trying to rush in... we were then escorted by the Felda auxiliary police," he said.

Last week, opposition leader and PKR de facto Anwar Ibrahim's ceramah in Sembrong, Johor was met with violence after Umno supporters allegedly threw stones, pieces of wood and firecrackers, as well as kicking at his Mercedes Benz, resulting in a cracked windscreen and a dented door.

The ceramah, organised at the PKR office at Jalan Mersing on Feb 20, was also repeatedly disrupted by youths who were shouting vulgarities at Anwar, blasting their motorcycle horns and revving their engines.

Several PKR supporters were also reported to have been injured after being attacked by youths using

slingshots. Police have said they are investigating the matter.

On Feb 13, Anwar's ceramah at the Felda Ghafar Baba in Machap, Malacca was disrupted.

A dozen video clips on the incident were uploaded on YouTube by pro-Umno supporters.

The clips show, among others, the supporters blasting Umno party songs with loudspeakers to drown out the opposition leader's speech.

'Umno and Perkasa must answer'

Meanwhile, during a press conference later today, Nik Nazmi said called on Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin (right) to make clear his stance on this matter.

"This is not the first time where youths have been used as tools by Umno to harass Pakatan Rakyat (leaders).

"They were waving Umno and BN flags and singing the Umno anthem, someone has to take responsibility, Umno has a responsibility to stop them," he said.

Nik Nazmi also called on Malay rights group Perkasa to respond, questioning whether it finds such behaviour as exemplary behaviour for Malay Muslims.

"The shop owner had given us permission to use the premises, it's private property but Umno still attempted to provoke us.

"They (Umno) have the mainstream media, this is the first time we (Nurul Izzah and Nik Nazmi) have gone to Felda and even then we are not given space," he said.

Additional reporting by Nigel Aw

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