

Penang BN: Guan Eng may have provoked fracas
MalaysiaKini.com
February 27, 2012
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Penang Barisan Nasional wants the police to investigate if the fracas which broke out at yesterday's anti-Lynas rally in the state involved provocation by Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

State Umno deputy chief Musa Sheikh Fadzir said the incident, where two journalists were reportedly hit by a group of hostile pro-Lynas protesters, only occurred after Lim arrived at the scene.

penang himpunan hijau 260212"Before Lim came, the situation was peaceful, but after he came, it turned chaotic. We do not know what he said about Umno to provoke those men," he added.

"We do not agree with the act, but we hope the police will investigate all the people involved including Lim," he stressed.

Musa said police should probe the whole process of the rally and what had been said by Lim.

"We do not want to blame anyone, the reporters were injured but the other side also claimed they were hurt," he added.

Lim had arrived at about 6.30pm, 30 minutes after the hostile group began heckling the anti-Lynas campaigners.

The stand-off between the pro and anti-Lynas group already begun before 6pm, when supporters in green started crowding the field.

The Bukit Mertajam Umno chief said one could not rule out the possibility that Lim may have been involved in organising his supporters to provoke the group to act against the anti-Lynas supporters.

Musa admitted that several members of BN Youth were present at the Esplanade every week.

However, he was uncertain if they were part of the hostile pro-Lynas group.

State BN working committee chairperson Dr Teng Hock Nam wants Lim to bear full responsibility for what happened in Esplanade yesterday.

"As the head of the state security council, he failed to inform the police that such an event was taking place," added the state Gerakan chief.

Teng said the BN does not condone violence and urged police to investigate the matter.

He also expressed sympathy for the injured reporters and wished them a speedy recovery.

Earlier, state Chief Police Officer Ayub Yaacob had also distanced himself from the incident by saying he was not informed about the event.

Ayub described the organisers of the rally as "arrogant", saying they must be aware of their duties and responsibilities to maintain peace if they did not want the police to be informed.

The fracas involved two male journalists - Adam Chew and Lee Hong Chun - from Chinese daily Kwong Wah Jit Poh, who were hit with helmets by identified individuals while covering the event.

This was the only anti-Lynas rally which was disrupted, while others in Perak, Kuala Lumpur and Kuantan

went on smoothly.

Its inconceivable, says Guan Eng

In an immediate response, Lim said it is "inconceivable" that he had provoked the pro-Lynas group into violence.

Lim said the event was not organised by the state, but by local NGOs, and he was merely a guest at the event, in which more than 500 anti-Lynas campaigners took part.

"Who came and first started the harassment and attacking us? Who used racist and vulgar words against us?" he queried.

"They were the ones who disrupted the rally," he added.

Lim said the accusation that he had engineered the fracas by BN was "baseless".

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