

'Anti-Lynas fracas a diversionary tactic'

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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has been blamed for inciting an attack on anti-Lynas protestors yesterday, in a bid to divert on-going scrutiny of the Bayan Mutiara land deal.

Levelling the accusation, the state Umno Youth chief Shaik Hussein Mydin said Lim did this because he feels 'extremely pressured' by revelations of details of the land sale.

NONEShaik Hussein (right) said he himself had challenged Lim or his political secretaries Ng Wei Aik or Zairil Khir Johari to a public debate about the land sale, but that none of the three have responded to date.

"It is proven that this is a cheap shot by Lim to confuse the people and to create a negative perception about Umno Youth to avoid the bigger issue - the scandal behind the Bayan Mutiara land sale," he said in a text-message to Malaysiakini.

"It is also clear that Lim provoked Umno Youth, with all kinds of words in his speech which is not befitting of a chief minister."

When a group shouting pro-Lynas slogans attempted to disrupt Lim's speech during the rally, he had told his bodyguards and supporters to "push them away".

The rally was organised by Suaram in solidarity with the Himpunan Hijau 2.0 lobby against the Lynas Advanced Materials Plant in Gebeng in Kuantan, Pahang.

The Penang leg of the solidarity gathering was the only rally that had been disrupted, leading to two journalists being injured.

Shaik Hussein sympathised with the reporters who, he said, were involved in a fracas between Tanjung Umno Youth members and the anti-Lynas supporters.

Journalists - Adam Chew and Lee Hong Chun - from Chinese daily Kwong Wah Jit Poh, were hit with helmets by unidentified individuals.

'DAP began the provocation'

Chew said he had defended himself when exposed to the violence, as he was protecting Lim while leaving the stage to join the protestors at the Esplanade.

However, after viewing available videos and photos and having read news reports, Shaik Hussein concluded that Lim had arranged for a small group of DAP supporters to provoke Umno Youth who often make speeches at the Esplanade on Sundays.

"It is impossible for a group of 20 Umno Youth members from Tanjung to provoke DAP supporters who numbered about 500," he said.

"Instead, I am very certain, that it was the DAP supporters who started the provocation and said some very rough words about Umno Youth."

Shaik Hussein also questioned why the anti-Lynas rally organiser - human rights NGO Suaram - had failed to inform the police about the event when very young people and senior citizens were participating.

He said the organiser should have ensured that there were no "extreme actions" or provocation by the protestors.

"These protestors displayed the prime minister's picture and that surely would have angered Umno Youth members," he claimed.

"But whatever we say, Lim is bound to spin it especially to the Chinese community to garner more support despite the Bayan Mutiara land scandal."

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