

Stop political violence, Bersih tells Najib
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Electoral reform coalition Bersih 2.0 has urged Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to act against the serial political violence inflicted on opposition politicians and civil society activists by thugs reportedly related to Umno and Perkasa.

Should such impunity on political violence continues, it will leaves no room for clean elections in Malaysia, Bersih 2.0 warned.

“If political activists are met with physical assaults even before elections, could the safety of opposition leaders and campaigners be guaranteed come the next election?” said its steering committee in a statement today.

The committee, co-chaired by former Bar Council president Ambiga Sreenevasan and national laureate A Samad Said, demanded that Najib order immediate investigations and prosecution of those responsible for the two latest incidents of political assault on Feb 26.

On that day, a group of thugs identified to be Umno Youth and Perkasa members allegedly attacked the anti-Lynas protesters in Penang, in which two reporters were injured.

“Most shockingly, the police personnel looked on and did not do anything. Later, the Chief Police Officer (CPO) of Penang, Ayub Yaakob, blamed it on the organisers for not informing the police of their event,” said the coalition.

NONEOn the same day, PKR MP for Lembah Pantai Nurul Izzah Anwar was allegedly assaulted by Asrullah Affendi Abdullah, an assistant of Umno Lepar state assemblyperson Mohd Shohaimi Jusoh, at Felda Lepar Hilir 1, Gambang, Pahang.

“These two are not isolated cases. Forums by student activists and the Anything But Umno (ABU) movement had experienced similar attacks and no one has yet been charged in court,” read the statement.

However, both Umno and Perkasa had denied that their members had used violence in the two incidents.

The election watchdog warned that if Najib refuses to take action to end such political violence, to have the assailants prosecuted and to punish those police personnel who shirked their responsibility, Malaysia may be pushed to the edge of chaos and unrest by electoral violence.

“In this alarming development, Bersih 2.0 calls upon Malaysians and the international community to establish an election observation mission to mitigate such a threat,” it added.