

DPM's Penang 1M'sia lunch sparks Umno-Pakatan row
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By Susan Loone

A war of words erupted between BN and Pakatan Rakyat leaders in Bayan Baru over the usage of road for an event involving the visit of Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to Penang tomorrow.

Yesterday morning, several Pakatan assemblyperson - Abdul Malik Abul NONEKassim (Batu Maung), Sim Tze Tzin (right) (Pantai Jerjak) and Lim Hock Seng (Bagan Jermal) had visited the original and new sites for the DPM's event - in Taman Iping (Batu Maung) and Persiaran Mahsuri (Bayan Baru) respectively.

They held a press conference at the new venue - about 50 metres from the canopies which had already been set up - but before they were done, several men approached them.

The group turned out to be Umno Bayan Baru information chief Mohd Ridzwan Bakar, accompanied by about six men, who then questioned the presence of the Pakatan leaders at the venue.

Sim, who is also PKR Bayan Baru chief, replied that the area was within the constituency of which he is the assemblyperson.

He asked Mohd Ridzwan if there was a permit for the usage of the public road to put up the canopies.

Pantai Jerjak YB tagged 'stupid'

Abdul Malik, a state executive councillor and PKR state veep, joined in, saying that he had a right to be around the area, adding he had not stepped under the canopies.

Mohd Ridzwan's response to repeatedly all Sim "stupid"for asking the wrong person about the permit.

"You should asked the authority who gave us the permit," he retorted.

"I am also a member of the public, I can use the road. Why do you come here? We do not disrupt your activities. Why you want to do this (to us)?" he queried.

Mohd Ridzwan was heard warning Abdul Malik "If there are no reporters around, you know lah (what will happen)".

Abdul Malik deemed the words a threat and the two parties started shouting at each other, but did not descend to physical contact between the two groups.

A pro-PKR NGO leader Azizan Salleh and a police officer at the scene tried to stop the argument, and the two warring parties backed off after five minutes.

Pakatan obstructing event

Meanwhile, at a press conference, Mohd Ridzwan showed reporters a letter from the police permitting the event.

He complained that the Pakatan leaders had come around to "obstruct the event, which made the people angry".

"This is a federal road, we just need to get approval from the police and inform the Works Department

and the local council," he said.

"We just need to inform them, and do not need to seek approval. I was a former local councillor, so I know the procedure," he added.

Earlier, Umno Bayan Baru chief Abdul Rahim Saibu criticised Abdul Malik's action which appeared to be aimed at "sabotaging" the 1Malaysia People's Lunch organised by the BN, when he had earlier prevented it from being held at Taman Iping, Batu Maung.

NONEMuhyiddin's (left) visit to Penang today kicks off with a meeting with factory workers at Western Digital in Bayan Lepas at 9.30am, followed by a lunch date with more than 5,000 Bayan Baru residents.

He is expected to be in Batu Kawan from 4pm to 5pm to hand over BR1M vouchers to the residents there.

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