

**Bersih: We'll try to get as close as possible to Dataran  
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By Hazlan Zakaria**

Electoral reform advocacy group Bersih has vowed to continue its planned sit-in protest tomorrow, but has pledged to accede to a court order banning the participants from gathering at the iconic Dataran Merdeka.

"We will not break the barriers, we will not breach the order... We will gather at our gathering points, which are not mentioned in the order (banning the group and members of the public), and move as close to the Dataran as possible.

NONE "This is in the hope of the goodwill of the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) in allowing us to use Dataran Merdeka anyway and not enforce the court order," its co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan (second from left) said at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

Bersih co-chair person Hishammuddin Rais, who was also present, explained that the six meeting points would be Dataran Gajah in Brickfields, Jalan Sultan, KLCC, the National Mosque, Masjid India and Pasar Seni.

Adamant that she would be there tomorrow despite the order naming her personally, Ambiga said that regardless of where they would be tomorrow, the sit-in will proceed at 2pm sharp, starting off with the group singing the national anthem, Negara-ku.

"We invite everyone to sing with us. We hope that the national anthem shall resound all throughout Kuala Lumpur."

She said the organisers were expecting more than 100,000 people to turn up tomorrow, and jokingly added that the numbers may increase by 20,000, just by the presence of the DBKL installed barriers ringing Dataran Merdeka.

Ambiga was served with a court order at 12.08pm today banning her in person, the Bersih 3.0 organisers and the general public from Dataran Merdeka for four days beginning tomorrow until May 1.

The order, which she accepted under protest, was issued by magistrate Zaki Asyraf Zubir of the Kuala Lumpur magistrate's court, and was applied for by the Dang Wangi OCPD.

Asked if they aimed to challenge the order in court, Ambiga said that there was not enough time to do it.

'Problems with the court order'

"We will continue looking at it, as we believe there are problems with the order."

For one, she pointed out that the order was addressed to the "organisers of Bersih", which to their legal understanding, referred to an entity that does not exist under the law.

NONE Commenting on another point of law, Ambiga pointed out that according to Section 14(1) of the newly gazetted Peaceful Assembly Act (PAA) 2011, the police cannot refuse permission for a planned gathering but can only impose conditions.

Section 14(2) of the Act, she said, states that an assembly can proceed as is, if no such conditions are imposed.

“As the police did not impose conditions on Bersih 3.0, it is legal and it is the police who have breached the PAA by forbidding the gathering.”

As for the refusal of the DBKL and the mayor to allow the gathering, she called it an “abuse of power” as in the group’s view, the rakyat do not need the consent of the mayor to engage in peaceful protest and exercise their constitutional rights.

NONEIn the end, Ambiga contended, the supreme law of the land must supersede everything.

“Considering the DBKL bylaws, the PAA and the federal constitution (which guarantees freedom to assemble), in our view, what prevails is the constitution.”

She stressed that Bersih does not want to fight with anyone in authority but is asking for their co-operation.

Ambiga said Bersih will deploy 6,000 security volunteers during the rally tomorrow, drawn from PAS’ Unit Amal, student group SAMM, DAP Socialist Youth and the PKR Youth AMK Skwad, alongside more than 100 medical volunteers.

The Bar Council and Suaram have also pledged legal assistance for participants in the case of arrest, with the contact numbers provided in these links to their sites.

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