

Indignant traders want Ambiga arrested

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A group of Malay traders who claimed their business was affected by the Bersih 3.0 rally has demanded the police arrest Bersih co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan.

Staging a noisy protest outside Pertama Complex, a shopping centre in Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman, Kuala Lumpur today, some 30 of them claimed that they have suffered more than RM200,000 loss in business from not having opened shop during the last Saturday rally.

Malaysia Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Alliance (Ikhlas) president Mohd Ridzuan Abdullah (*photo right*) blamed that Bersih has "smashed their rice bowls" and complained that their businesses had suffered severely in the last three Bersih rallies.

"Bersih is so '*kurang ajar*'. We urge the government to arrest Ambiga and chase her out of the country.

"Don't only catch the small fries. If the Home Ministry fails to do it, we will stage a rally in front of Ambiga's house and do business over there," he warned.

Protesters displayed banners that read '*Keluar Dari Tanah Melayu*' (Get out of Malay land), '*Bersih Komunis*' (Bersih is communist), 'Bersih - an Agenda to Wipe Out Malay and Muslim political power' and '*Kami Sokong YB Dato Sri PM*' (We support the PM).

Mohd Ridzuan warned that his group will hold a similar protest should Bersih decide to go for its 4.0 rally.

However, he admitted to reporters that he does not have any shop in Kuala Lumpur and that he had joined the rally in his capacity as Ikhlas leader.

Blowing whose trumpet?

The protesters also blew South African *vuvuzela* trumpets in an attempt to attract attention from shoppers.

Mohd Ikhlas Ridzuan (*far right in photo*), who runs a photograph shop on the ground floor of Pertama Complex, said a photography lesson for four of his students had to be deferred because of the Bersih rally, claiming that he suffered RM10,000 in losses.

"We reject anyone who disturbs our business. No matter whether it is Bersih 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 or 4.0, we will oppose it until the last drop of our blood," he said.

He went further to claim that his business had been so badly affected since the reformasi movement a decade ago that he is now in debt.

Zainul Hanapiah Ahmad, who owns a uniform shop as well as a food stall in Pertama Complex,

urged the government to take drastic action to prevent Bersih from holding a fresh rally.

"Don't wait until our country becomes chaotic and the government is overthrown like what had happened in the Middle East," he warned.

Zainul Hanapiah said he suffered RM1,500 in losses during the Bersih rally and he called on the federal territories minister and the city mayor to pay the traders a visit.

'DAP turning M'sia communist'

However, when asked to comment on the fact that several business outlets enjoyed brisk business last Saturday, the traders pinned the blame on Pertama Complex's joint management body (JMB).

They claimed the JMB had issued a notice advising all tenants to shut down as the complex could not be held responsible for possible damage should there be clashes between the protesters and the authorities.

When asked why they did not protest the decision, they said "because the instructions were reasonable."

Meanwhile, Mohd Ridzuan, who wore a white shirt displaying the 1Malaysia logo, claimed that the shops that opened on April 28 belonged to foreign labourers, many of whom supported Bersih.

He also blamed DAP for whipping up racial sentiments and conspiring to turn Malaysia into a communist regime.

"Don't wait until one day it backfires on your own race and the Chinese are chased out from this country like what happened in Indonesia before," he warned.

His group is gathering claims of losses in business from the traders in order to lodge a police report in two weeks' time.

'Take action against Bersih leaders'

In a related development, Malay rights group Perkasa has called on the government to take stern action against the Bersih 3.0 organisers and not only against the rally participants.

Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali said the organisers of the rally that turned ugly got away scot-free while the protestors had to bear the brunt.

"It is important for the authorities to take action and prosecute leaders of the rally," he said in a statement today.

He said the people would lose confidence in the government if only small fry got charged while the sharks got away scot-free.

In this regard, he said Perkasa urged the authorities to take action against organisers of the rally.

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