

## **Traders, youths and bikers at anti-Ambiga protest**

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**By Koh Jun Lin**

Two anti-Bersih groups have surrounded the vicinity of Bersih co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan's residence today.

Numbering over 150, the protesters are demonstrating against Bersih for holding a rally in Kuala Lumpur on April 28.

The first group, calling themselves Halau 1.0, arrived at about 4.15pm to demand an apology from Ambiga, saying that she should leave the country if she fails to do so.

The group of about 50, led by Gerakan Belia Gagasan 1Malaysia president Shahrul Nasrun Kamaruddin, was stopped at a police roadblock set up some distance away from Ambiga's house on Jalan Setiakasih 1, Bukit Damansara.

Also present to maintain order were enforcement officers from the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), who had been monitoring the area since Monday.

After speaking to Brickfields OCPD Wan Abdul Bari Wan Abdul Khalid, Shahrul and four others were allowed to handover a memorandum, and left after holding a press conference.

The memorandum was received by Bersih co-chairperson A Samad Said, while Ambiga was nowhere to be seen, raising Shahrul's ire.

"This shows that Ambiga is not a gentleman," he told reporters, vowing to return if no apology was forthcoming.

His one-page memorandum, was titled '10 Reasons why Ambiga should be expelled from Malaysia', and carried an image apparently depicting a devil with two horns and red skin, and its face covered by a mask of Ambiga's face.

The memo, among others, accused Ambiga of being the 'Number One Traitor', an instigator who led Malaysians to breach a court order and the violence at Bersih 3.0, and a liar for twisting facts on the Election Commission, bumiputra rights, and the Interfaith Council.

Just as Halau 1.0 was leaving at 4.40pm, a group of about 20 traders arrived, led by businessman Jamal Md Yunus who claims to represent traders and residents in Kuala Lumpur affected by the Bersih rally.

Jamal himself had arrived earlier with the Halau 1.0 group.

At least 30 youths on motorcycles were also spotted at the scene to show their support for protesters, but were barred from even entering the housing area by Kuala Lumpur City Hall

officers.

They left their area and returned on foot with a larger group, bringing the total size of the group, dubbed “Bersih 4.0 peace-lovers”, to about 100, and they were issued Bersih 4.0 T-shirts on the spot.

Plans to set up market called off

Jamal called off earlier plans to set up market stalls in front Ambiga’s house, and left at about 5.15pm after handing in a memorandum addressed to her and holding a press conference.

In Jamal’s memorandum, he urged Ambiga to respect the law, not to hold another protest as it only brought losses to their business, and to compensate for those losses.

“We willingly and unanimously cancelled our plans to conduct business in front of your house out of respect the laws of the land.

“We also apologise to all your neighbours and your supporters. We the traders of Kuala Lumpur merely want to make a living and we don’t want to make enemies, including with you. We just want to claim our rights,” wrote Jamal, who is the chairperson of the Traders and City-dwellers Action Council.

The group was formerly known as Kuala Lumpur Petty Traders Action Council until yesterday and originally planned to set up 60 stalls today and tomorrow.

He also said a group of some 100 traders would be present tomorrow at his restaurant at Jalan Pahang, Kuala Lumpur to file claims for their losses.

In addition, he announced that a rally, dubbed “Bersih 4.0 Loves Peace” would be held at Bukit Jalil Stadium on June 23.

Ambiga apologises for 'not fighting harder'

Speaking at a press conference after the protesters had left, Ambiga expressed thanks to people who had expressed support to her as the groups protested outside her home.

Asked to comment on demands for her to apologise over Bersih 3.0, she said: “I am 55 years old. I apologise to the next generation that I did not fight harder when I should have to make sure that Malaysia does not descend to this level.”

She said urging people to read the memorandums submitted by her detractors and make their own conclusions.

She also denied claims that she was unsympathetic of people who had lost money during the pro-electoral reform rally, but said it should be weighed against the benefits of having free and fair elections.

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