

Bersih 3.0: Anwar, Azmin slapped with new charge
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim and two other PKR leaders have been slapped with an additional charge of abetment for their alleged involvement in the breaking the barricades at the Bersih 3.0 rally.

The new charge is the third levelled against the trio, who were initially charged for participating in an illegal rally and violating a court order.

None Anwar and the other two PKR leaders - deputy president Azmin Ali (left) and former PKR supreme council member Badrul Hisham Shaharin - are among first to be charged under the recently-passed Peaceful Assembly Act.

On May 22, the three were charged under section 4(2)(c) of the new law with participating in the rally and violating a court order at between 2.30pm and 3pm on April 28.

The court order, which magistrate Zaki Asyraf Zubir had signed on April 26, prohibited the mammoth gathering at Dataran Merdeka and the area between Jalan Sultan Hishammuddin, Jalan Raja and Jalan Kelab.

None If found guilty, they are liable to a maximum fine of RM10,000. Anwar and Azmin could lose their status as elected representatives if their fine exceeds RM2,000.

They also faced a second charge under section 188 of the Penal Code in that they allegedly breached a magistrate's order.

They are also said to have conspired with Rasah PKR division deputy head R Tangam, lawyer G Rajesh Kumar and van driver Farhan Ibrahim @ Alias by inciting them to breach the barricade surrounding Dataran Merdeka, which 'could have caused a riot or clashes'.

If convicted, they are liable to a maximum jail term of a month or fine of RM2,000, or both.

The three pleaded not guilty to the three charges.

In an immediate reaction, an angry Anwar said this was yet another instance of political persecution.

The court has set Sept 3 for mention.

Anwar also claimed that this is unending political suppression toward him, and this is "crazy" (gila).

The trio were charged with having a mutual intention in abetting Tangam, Rajesh, Farhan and more than five Bersih 3.0 supporters to violate the court order and causing the latter to act violently in the rally.

If found guilty, they are liable for a maximum jail term of two years and a fine, or both.

Prosecution applies for joint trial

Today is the mention date for the case involving Rajesh, Tangam and Farhan, and the prosecution, led by deputy public prosecutor Abdul Wahab Mohamad, applied for a joint trial for Anwar and five others.

Meanwhile, Anwar's counsel Karpal Singh told the court he needed more time to file the affidavit-in-reply as the prosecution had filed 30 affidavits in responding to Anwar's application to strike out two other charges brought against him last May 22.

Karpal also informed the court that he needed two weeks to amend the application to include striking out the new charge.

The judge also fixed Sept 3 to hear the application to strike out as well as the preliminary objection filed against Anwar's strike-out applications.

Azmin's counsel CV Prabhakaran also informed the court his client may wish to file the same application if the striking-out hearing favours Anwar.

He said, if the court allows Anwar's application, then Azmin should be acquitted as well.

Meanwhile, Farhan through his lawyer Shamsul Iskandar Akin, applied for 'marriage leave', to be exempted from attending the next mention hearing as he is going to marry on Sept 2.

The court also allowed Rajesh to be absent from court on that day as he needs to attend another case.

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