

Police say no to anti-FGV listing march
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By Victor WS Tan

The police have denied permission for a procession slated for this Saturday to protest the listing of Felda Global Ventures Bhd (FGV).

Persatuan Anak Peneroka Felda (Anak) leader Mazlan Aliman said the police claim that the procession would cause traffic problems.

Anak, a PAS-linked group which claims to represent Felda settlers, are planning a 3km march from the Federal Territories Mosque to the new Istana Negara.

"From the discussions with the authorities thus far, the procession will not be allowed to proceed," he said.

Mazlan said negotiations with the police and palace officials are still ongoing and a decision would be made a day before the proposed rally, dubbed the Orange Rally to Save Felda.

The group intends to submit a petition to the Agong to seek his intervention in the listing, which Anak argued was detrimental to Felda settlers in the long term.

They are targeting a turnout of 20,000 and will be supported by a host of NGOs and opposition parties.

Mazlan assured that the procession would be peaceful and Anak intends to comply to police requests, such as a name list individuals who will be handing the petition to the palace.

Previously, Anak had written to the police to seek their cooperation in controlling traffic and ensuring the safety of the rally participants.

'Pak Lah should support us'

Meanwhile, Mazlan said Anak was not involved in a widely distributed poster promoting the event, which depicted Pakatan Rakyat leaders alongside two serving parliamentarians from Umno - Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

Although he disassociated Anak from the poster, Mazlan tried to justify its content by stating that both individuals have shown disapproval of the listing.

"Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad attempted to list FGV on the international market, and Abdullah stopped this.

"If FGV were listed during that time, what would have happened? Felda might cease to exist today, and the settlers would have lost everything. We value his actions", he said.

Mazlan added that he had tried to approach Abdullah to support his group's cause but the latter is currently overseas.

"History tells us that former Umno leaders have been persecuted by their own party, of which they often ceased to be a part because they fought for what they believed in", he said

"My small heart believes that the former premier is still consistent with his stand, and we will approach him aggressively. It may take 3 years, 4 years, but I believe that he will not remain silent.", he said.

Police explain ban

In a statement late this evening, Sentul district police chief Zakaria Pagan confirmed that two meetings have been held with Anak.

Zakaria said the mosque cannot be used as a staging point for the rally because places of worship are scheduled as a restricted area under the Peaceful Assembly Act 2012.

He said his men had also told Anak that the proposed procession path was not allowed to march through Jalan Duta as planned because of safety reasons.

"Marchers and motorists will be exposed to a lot of risk due to the (heavy traffic) condition on (the particular) road," said Zakaria.

He added that the palace was also off limits to the protesters because it is a protected area governed by the Protected Areas and Protected Places Act 1959.

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