

## **'No to kids at 112 rally, but okay for Najib event?'**

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The government has been slammed for double-standards in allowing children and students at the prime minister's event yesterday while forbidding the same at the People's Uprising Rally at Stadium Merdeka.

Malaysian Indians Progressive Association (Mipas) secretary general S Barathidasan (right) noted that the event featuring Prime Minister Najib Razak at Semenyih yesterday saw the attendance of children and students.

Meanwhile after the massive Pakatan Rakyat-led event in the heart of Kuala Lumpur that saw at least 100,000 converge at the iconic stadium, the police announced that they are probing the organisers over the presence of children at the rally.

Prior to the rally, some universities also warned its students from participating in the KL rally.

"Mipas queries the comment of the higher education minister discouraging students of higher institutions of learning from taking part in this rally.

"Meanwhile the police have warned that children are not allowed to participate in the rally too. Now the question is why this double standards exist?

"Why was there no restriction or warning from the Police or the higher education minister, when there were children and students spotted at a 'Meet-the People' event with Najib organised by the Indian Progressive Front (IPF) at Dataran Tecso in Semenyih (above)?

"Basically both events were people's gatherings," said Barathidasan.

Kudos to Unit Amal

Barathidasan, who said Mipas was "proud to be part of this historic event" commended PAS' Unit Amal for a job well done in managing the huge crowd.

"Mipas salute the "PAS' Unit Amal" members who have done an excellent job that had to control the crowd to avoid a stampede.

"Unit Amal could handle it professionally without any disturbance from the police and the police should emulate PAS' Unit Amal," he said.

He noted how yesterday's rally proceeded smoothly without incident, "because the Police and FRU did not fired tear gas and water cannons".

In comparison, the Bersih 3.0 rally last April had ended "ugly" because of police action, he said.

"Now it has cleared the doubts that things get worse after the police (action) starts. All Malaysian love harmony and a peaceful gathering," he said.

During one of the largest public gatherings at Bersih 3.0 last April 28, an estimated 150,000 in yellow marched the streets of KL and converged at Dataran Merdeka, demanding electoral reform.

The rally had proceeded without incident in a carnival atmosphere, until it was marred by chaos that ensued after water cannons were fired into the crowd who were at the time had been called by the organisers to disperse peacefully.

Suhakam is presently conducting an inquiry into the reports of police brutality during that historic gathering.

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