

Zahid: Changing gov't by coup undemocratic

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By Hazlan Zakaria

Any attempt to effect a change of government through a popular coup is clearly outside the democratic process and will be met with suitable police response, warns Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

"All will agree that the formation of a government must be via democratic process. It never happened (in Malaysia) that a change of government is affected via a coup.

"A coup is outside the democratic process, it sidelines the authority of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong," Zahid told a press conference at the Bukit Aman federal police headquarters today, after reviewing a police guard-of-honour on his maiden visit there as home minister.

He said this in reference to the arrest of student activist Adam Adli for his speech at a forum last week allegedly instigating a popular rally to oust the BN-led federal government, claiming irregularities in recent polls which made the ruling coalition win illegitimate.

The rally is planned by pro-democracy activists. Opposition pact Pakatan Rakyat has distanced itself from the controversial rally that is reportedly said to call for a 'Malaysian spring' to change the government.

'Avoid having to pay a steep price'

Pakatan Rakyat component PKR has staged its own rallies nationwide, dubbed as 'Black 505', to protest what to claim was a 'blackout' of democracy in Malaysia through polls irregularities and fraud to allegedly steal electoral victory from the opposition.

black 505 rally seremban crowdZahid said should such a street rally or coup attempt take place, the police would do their duty and act to preserve law and order.

"There's no need (to repeat) warnings. Police will take action under our existing laws, without (political) interference.

"You may be willing to pay the price, but avoid having to pay a steep price. Please do not join any illegal rallies," he further warned.

Zahid asked the organisers to refrain from organising such activities and not to try to challenge the police, for "the law enforcement bodies will and shall act".

'No intention to overthrow government'

This evening, the spokesperson for a group of over 50 NGOs that is organising the event, Badrul Hisham Shaharin, denied that the rally was intent on overthrowing the government ala 'Arab spring' or 'Malaysian spring', as claimed by the authorities.

NONE Badrul Hisham, who is better known as Chegubard (right), said the gathering on May 25 by the NGOs is called the 'People's Festival' and is directed at bringing back the democratic rights of the people nationwide.

The gathering is to be held at the Amcorp Mall field in Petaling Jaya, during which evidence and witnesses of fraud during the May 5 general election earlier this month is to be revealed.

"I want to emphasise that this gathering is not the 'Malaysian spring', nor an attempt or plan to overthrow the government.

"It is the people standing to fight for their democratic rights, which have been stolen from them," Chegubard said, adding that the wild allegations on the NGOs were an attempt to frighten the rise of the people for their rights.

He also hoped that all parties concerned, including the police, would give their cooperation and not fall to the propaganda by certain individuals to scare away the people.

Among the 50 NGOs slated to take part in the 'People's Festival' are human rights NGO Suaram, Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia, Asalkan Bukan Umno, Tindak Malaysia, Parti Sosialis Malaysia and Parti Rakyat Malaysia.

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