

## **PKR faces Catch-22 over Black 505 venue**

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**By Koh Jun Lin**

PKR says that it is often caught in a Catch-22 situation when it comes to organising rallies, because both the venue owners and the police would insist that the party should get the other side's 'clearance' first before giving their own green light.

NONEIn the latest instance, the Dang Wangi police has reportedly said that PKR's application to hold a 'Black 505' rally at Padang Merbok on June 15 was "incomplete" as it did not include a letter from the venue's owner expressing approval for PKR to use the field.

"From our previous experience in the past rallies, the police's insistence that an approval from the venue's owner is attached together with such notification creates a conundrum.

"(This is) because the venue owner, on the other hand, insists that the police give clearance first before they agree.

"This creates an unnecessary obstacle that is against the spirit of Peaceful Assembly Act (PAA), whereby the issue of police permission does not arise," PKR director of strategy Rafizi Ramli said when contacted yesterday.

Only notification needed

He pointed out that under the PAA, rally organisers only need to inform the police 10 days in advance of the event, which the party did on Wednesday.

azlanAn application to hold the rally has been sent to the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), which manages Padang Merbok, on the same day.

However, Rafizi said he has yet to receive any response from DBKL so far, and there is no change in the rally plans for now.

"Nevertheless, we will continue to consult the OCPD of Dang Wangi to maintain the cordial working relationship and we have been in constant communication," the Pandan MP said.

Rafizi was contacted by Malaysiakini following a tweet from Nanyang Siang Pau yesterday in which the police said the PKR application to hold the rally was

incomplete and thus had not met PAA's requirements.

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