

DBKL won't allow rally at Padang Merbok

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By Lee Long Hui

Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) has rejected Pakatan Rakyat's application to hold its latest 'Black 505' rally at Padang Merbok on June 22.

At a press conference today, Mayor Ahmad Phesal Talib said City Hall made the decision on three grounds.

Firstly, he said the Malaysian Olympic Council will be holding an event on the field on June 23 - the booking was made last year.

The organisers will be making "logistics preparations" a day earlier.

Secondly, the 'Black 505' rally will cause a massive traffic jam as the field is close to several main arteries of Kuala Lumpur.

He said the roads that will be affected include Jalan Parlimen, Jalan Kuching, Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin, Jalan Raja Laut, Jalan Raja and Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman.

NONE "If they are holding the rally from 11am to 6pm, it will cause problems to those who want to go in or out of the (city centre)," he said.

And finally, Ahmad Phesal (right) said, DBKL rejected the application on grounds that it needed to "protect" the decoration and landscape along Jalan Parlimen.

"Jalan Parlimen is a 'protocol' road - we have renovated it with beautiful landscaping and relevant facilities, and it is a popular place for bicycling during weekends," he said.

'Organisers should seek other venues'

Pakatan had initially planned to hold the rally on June 15, but postponed it to June 22 as two other events are planned nearby on the same day.

PKR director of strategy Rafizi Ramli has stressed that the opposition pact "will not budge" from its current plan.

Ahmad Phesal said the rally organisers should seek other venues - particularly enclosed spaces - such as a stadium.

azlan"DBKL is not allowing Padang Merbok to be used, but will assist them to look for a more suitable venue, such as the rally they held (on May 8) in Selangor," he said.

He recommended that Pakatan holds the rally either at Stadium Merdeka or the Titiwangsa Stadium.

"They can't hold (the rally) at the Bukit Jalil Stadium because the field is spoiled. And the Cheras Stadium is under renovation."

He also said DBKL would call a meeting with the Pakatan leadership and the police at 8am on June 14 to discuss how to ensure the rally can be held.

Ahmad Phesal also noted that hawkers could do good business if the rally was held in at a "proper" place.

"We are not stopping them (from holding the rally), as this is part of the decision of the government in terms of rally policies. It's just that we, DBKL, feel that they should hold it in an enclosed place to provide the opportunity for the hawkers to do business," he added.

Asked what action he would take if Pakatan insisted on holding the rally at Padang Merbok, Ahmad Phesal said DBKL enforcement officers and the police would act according to the law.

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