

PKR not fazed by rejection of bid to hold rally

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By Koh Jun Lin

PKR is not fazed by the Kuala Lumpur City Hall's (DBKL) rejection of its application to hold the Pakatan Rakyat 'Black 505' rally at Padang Merbok from noon on June 22.

DBKL was clearly running out of excuses to prevent Pakatan from holding rally because no event has been booked at the site on that day, PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli said today, and he added that Pakatan "will not budge" from its current plan.

NONE"The more new excuses or reasons DBKL gives, the more ridiculous they sound...

"DBKL has to take account that the right of peaceful assembly is a right that Malaysians take seriously," Rafizi said when contacted today.

Kuala Lumpur Mayor Ahmad Phesal Talib told a press conference earlier today that DBKL was turning down the application to hold the rally at Padang Merbok for three reasons.

These are to allow the Malaysian Olympic Council to make preparations for its own function there on June 23, to prevent any traffic jam on the main roads into the city and to protect the surrounding landscape.

Ahmad Phesal then went on to offer to help PKR find a more suitable venue for the rally, such as a stadium.

Rafizi countered that discussions could be held to find a way to allow both the rally and the Malaysian Olympic Council's event, which would only be held a day after the rally.

'All rallies have been peaceful and orderly'

DBKL's other concerns should not arise at all, he said, because these are mitigated by the peaceful and orderly manner in which the earlier 'Black 505' rallies were held.

NONEAsked about the possibility of police intervention to stop the rally, Rafizi said

he would write to the police tomorrow to appeal to them to "act professionally".

"I will implore upon the police to understand that DBKL is under extreme pressure from BN not to proceed with the rally, and for the police to understand that the right to peaceful assembly is guaranteed under the Peaceful Assembly Act," Rafizi said.

The Pandan MP also expressed confidence that police would appreciate that the rallies have been peaceful and that DBKL's reasons made no sense.

"As always, we are happy to sit down and discuss with the police, but the rally will go on at Padang Merbok on June 22," he said.

Following DBKL's decision, Rafizi added, more rally marshals would be mobilised to ensure that there would be no untoward incidents during the rally.

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