

'Malay' Mat Sabu 'not insulted' by flash mob

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A PAS politician has dismissed any notion of feeling 'insulted' by what had happened during the kangkung-themed flash mob organised by PKR's Machang Bubuk assemblyperson Lee Khai Loon on Jan 16.

"I'm a Malay and I don't feel insulted," PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu told Malaysiakini.

"The one who should feel insulted is Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak who started the issue in the first place and Umno which is turning it into a racial issue."

"This is an economic issue that affects the entire nation and not just Malays, Umno should stop turning it into a racial issue.

"Najib's reference to kangkung (as an analogy in discussing price increases) is wrong as the vegetable grows along drains. We are more concerned about the rise of prices of essential goods."

Yesterday, about 300 pro-Najib supporters had held a protest against Lee in Alma. They were angered by the flash mob, during which an effigy of Najib had been 'fed' with bundles of kangkung.

"Insulting the PM, a Malay leader, is akin to insulting the Malays," they had claimed.

Mohamad, popularly known as Mat Sabu, ticked off the police, urging them to be more protective of public safety.

The crowd had become rowdy as they marched to Lee's service centre, where they put up posters condemning him and banged on the shutters of a shoplot.

"The police should have acted or tried to stop the unruly crowd earlier, when they started banging on the shutters of the shoplot below Lee's service centre," Mat Sabu said.

"The police did not have to wait until two people got beaten up. Their job is to protect victims and not Umno."

Some members of the crowd also attacked two individuals, claiming to have heard them say "Melayu bodoh" (Stupid Malays).

The police then stepped in to take one of the victims to the Penang Hospital for a check-up, but he did not sustain any injuries.

Umno's 'racist face' on view

Penang PKR Youth chief Dr Afif Bahardin said Umno showed its true "racist face" at the two protests against Lee over the weekend.

Afif (left) said Umno supporters also showed how "anti-people and anti-youth (the party is) when trying to stir up racial tensions" in Penang.

"History has shown that the Malays are cultured and good mannered in their actions. The poet Usman Awang has described Malays as being 'witty and humourous'," he said.

"The actions of Umno and its supporters at the two rallies do not reflect the true character of the Malays. Instead, they reflect the true character of Umno which does not represent the great Malay race.

"If the late Onn Jaafar, the founder of Umno, were to see the behaviour of members today, he would be sorely disappointed."

Afif said the flash mob merely reflected the frustrations of the people over Najib's "insensitive" speech, which revealed how "out of touch" he is with citizens burdened by higher prices of essential goods.

Umno's attempts to resurrect the ghost of the May 13, 1969 racial riot, at its first rally at Sunway Carnival Mall on Saturday, is out of line with Najib's 1Malaysia slogan, Afif noted.

Afif urged state Umno information head Reezal Merican (left) to take responsibility for the physical violence during yesterday's protest.

Reezal has denied that Umno had led, planned or orchestrated any such acts, saying he could not control the crowd and that it was not incumbent upon him to do so, as this was not his programme.

"I urge the people to continue protesting against the rising cost of living in all kinds of creative ways to show the federal government that its leaders must not play with

people power," he said.

"The government will always find ways to make the people obey them but we have to continue showing them that we are not easily cowed by their tactics."

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