No apology to thugs, Kit Siang agrees
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An apology for the kangkung-themed flash mob should not be seen as a sign of weakness or as caving in to threats of violence, veteran DAP leader Lim Kit Siang said today.

Lim was referring to the refusal of PKR's Machang Bubuk assemblyperson Lee Khai Loon to apologise for organising the flash mob on Jan 15, which has been criticised as being excessive in mocking Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Lee had explained that the flash mob - during which about 10kg of kangkung were pushed into the mouth of an effigy representing Najib - was designed to raise public awareness of government policies which have led to higher prices for many essential goods.

"When I suggested that Lee should consider apologising ... for disrespect to the office of the prime minister, I never for one moment suggested an apology to the samseng (thugs), for I fully agree that no one should bow down to threats or any form of violence," Lim (above, right) said in a statement.

In any case, he conceded, nobody should force anybody to apologise.

Lim noted, for example, that no apology has been offered to former Bersih co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan for the 'butt dance' outside her house, or to the Penang chief minister for abominable incidents carried out by political opponents.

Urgent action needed, PM told

Lim said his call was part of an "open letter" to the prime minister and his cabinet ministers, asking for urgent action to avoid the threat of racial turmoil, such as the May 13, 1969 incident.

For this purpose, Lim floated the idea for a bi-partisan BN-Pakatan Rakyat leadership summit to help reach an agreement on five issues that he said were tearing the nation apart.

These are racial and religious polarisation, a deepening economic crisis, grand

corruption, deteriorating national education standards and policing issues.

"Unfortunately, the leaderless, headless, clueless and rudderless drift of the Najib government had continued in its aimless direction in the past two weeks, with no resolution in sight for the five crises.

"In many aspects, the national situation has got worse over the past fortnight, " Lim said.

Therefore, Lim urged the cabinet meeting today to be concerned about a "systematic campaign by a group of irresponsible and reckless elements to incite racial and religious hatred, conflict and tension to create another May 13 situation to destabilise the country".

This, in Lim's view, supersedes the debate on whether Lee should apologise for his flash mob incident.

"As Lee has decided on his course of action, let us move on," Lim said.

Among those asking for Lee to apologise are Umno supreme council member Reezal Merican Naina Merican (left).

Reezal said at a rally by Penang Umno members and their allies over the weekend to condemn Lee for his actions that the rally could have been avoided if the assemblyperson had apologised.

During the rally, some 300 people shouted obscenities directed at Lee and burnt a mannequin with Lee's photograph in place of the head. Some protesters also spat on Lee's photograph.

The group also displayed a banner with the warning, "Because of DAP leaders' mouths, May 13 happened... want some more?"

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