

## **Turun rally to proceed despite Lim's advice**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Jan 25, 2014**

It is learnt that Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has advised NGOs protesting price hikes to postpone their rally planned for tomorrow in Seberang Jaya.

The advice reportedly came in view of the rise in tensions resulting from two pro-BN rallies last weekend protesting a kangkung theme flash mob organised by Machang Bubuk assemblyman Lee Khai Loon, which protestors say insulted Prime Minister Najib Razak for using the vegetable to justify a series of price hikes in the country.

The first rally on Saturday in Seberang Jaya heard threats of a repeat of the May 13 racial riots, while the second on Sunday in Alma, Bukit Mertajam, ended in violence, with two men attacked by several protestors for allegedly uttering racist words.

State Jingga 13 coordinator Amizudin Ahmat said the NGOs respected Lim's concerns and advice but said Pakatan Rakyat leaders should not forget the people's anger towards the dramatic rise in cost of living.

"The people do not need leaders who forget the rakyat or those who only use the rakyat during general elections but after winning (votes) forget the rakyat," said Amizudin, in his Facebook posting today.

He urged the public to participate in the rally to be held at the open parking space in Bandar Sunway, from 2pm to 4pm tomorrow.

Peaceful rally, why fear?

He added that key personalities attending the rally include Deputy Chief Minister I Rashid Hasnon, PAS deputy president and state commissioner Mohamad Sabu, MPs - Mujahid Yusuf Rawa (Parit buntar) and Rafizi Ramli (Pandan) - and state assemblypersons Afif Bahardin (Seberang Jaya) and Lee Khai Loon.

When asked, Tanjung MP Ng Wei Aik denied there was ever a directive from Lim not to attend the rally.

Ng, who is state DAP Youth chief, however, said because of a prior engagement he will not be attending the event.

But DAP national chairperson Karpal Singh said DAP members have the right to do so as long as it is peaceful.

Unlawful rallies, he added, are those which seek to overthrow the government - a charge previously hurled at the Turun coalition of NGOs.

"BN leaders should also join the rally to explain to the people about the price hike. This is the best time for them to address the crowd and justify why the country needs to have it," said the Bukit Gelugor MP.

Karpal also called on the police to protect the rally-goers in case the event turns rowdy, saying there is no need to seek a permit for it, although state police chief Abdul Rahim Hanafi vowed there would be no double standards and events without 10-day notice would be probed under the Peaceful Assembly Act.

"BN leaders have addressed thousands of people in many rallies over the years without a permit so police should not practise double standards," he said.

CM expressed concern

According to Amizudin, the CM's advice was relayed to PKR assemblypersons who attended the safety and security meeting at 3pm in Komtar yesterday.

The meeting was held to discuss the violence at last weekend's pro-Umno rallies and the recent case where assistant district officer Abu Hassan Osman was assaulted in front of 35 police officers during an operation to demolish illegal hawkers stalls in Teluk Bahang.

Lim's concerns were told to Amizudin and his team at a 9pm meeting last night at Cherok Tokun by PKR assemblypersons who also attended the 3pm meeting.

Meanwhile Afif, who is state executive councillor, expressed support for tomorrow's rally, urging participants to reject racist politics.

"The gathering is to demand for true reformasi in economy, a total rejection of corruption and wastage of public funds," said the state PKR Youth chief.

Afif said PKR Youth will mobilise its supporters to attend the peaceful event, urging all quarters to refrain from provoking others.

"I remind the party youth members to observe discipline and maintain good

behaviour at all times during the rally," he added.

In an immediate response, Lim said that the advice given to the NGOs was based on a unanimous decision by all Pakatan reps who attended the meeting yesterday.

"Since the situation is tense, we tried to propose to the organisers to see if they can postpone the rally.

"(But) if they insist on proceeding with the rally, we will not stop them. We gave the suggestion solely because of the tense situation," he stressed.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/252753>