

Police say no, but Bersih backs anti-GST rally
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The movement for electoral reform, Bersih, which has been at the forefront of mammoth free and fair voting rallies in the country, has thrown its weight behind the May Day protest and urged Malaysians to turn up in force.

The May Day protest, in conjunction with International Worker's Day on May 1, is aimed at voicing out against the goods and services tax (GST), which was passed in Parliament this month and will come into effect on April 1 next year.

"Bersih fully supports the Workers' Day rally themed 'GST: Gasak Sampai Tumbang' (GST: Fight until it's defeated), which is organised by a group of NGOs and political parties under an ad hoc committee.

"Since workers are voters, too, the rally will also call for fair and free elections as well as fundamental freedoms, especially of the media, which are among the core issues of Bersih," the NGO said in a statement today.

Meanwhile, the police have rejected the application to hold the rally at Dataran Merdeka.

This follows the failure of the organisers to give notice and gain approval from the location owners, Berita Harian reported today.

Application received, but...

The report quoted Dang Wangi police chief Zainuddin Ahmad as saying that although the police received an application, it had to be rejected as it failed to meet conditions under Section 9(1) of the Peaceful Assembly Act.

"The organisers failed to fulfil the conditions of the section to give notice and gain approval from the location's owner to march and gather at Dataran Merdeka.

"The organisers only gave a notice to inform police but no approval was gained from the owners, resulting in their application being rejected," he was quoted as saying by the daily.

Zainuddin said he had informed the organisers that Dataran Merdeka is closed for repairs and they should change the venue to Stadium Merdeka and seek approval from the stadium authorities.

It was reported yesterday that PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu, PAS central committee member Dr Mohd Hatta Ramli, and PKR vice-president Tian Chua had met

Zainuddin.

It was reported that the organisers are adamant in using Dataran Merdeka, from where protesters would march to KLCC.

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