

NGO invites Najib to present his side of story

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By Radzi Razak

Civil society members and concerned citizens will have a chance to grill Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak at a major dialogue session with NGOs and civil society groups this Friday.

Organiser SukaGuam - a law-based NGO - said today the two-hour session will give participants ample time to actively take part in a Q&A (question and answer) session regarding all the issues surrounding Najib and his administration.

Chairman Khairul Anwar Rahmat (photo) said NGOs, activist leaders and the public could ask Najib on all topics including controversial issues such as 1MDB and the Tabung Haji land deals.

The Q&A session is themed 'Nothing to Hide', he said, adding that Najib had confirmed with the organisers his attendance for the event.

"We want this dialogue to be an effective platform as SukaGuam is a law-based NGO.

"In court, there are submissions and the other party is always given the chance to counter the arguments," he said at a press conference.

Najib is currently on a nationwide tour to drum up support after being criticised mainly by former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Among the issues being raised are Najib's allegedly excessive spending and his handling of 1MDB and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Najib meanwhile addressed some of the issues through his blog postings.

Yesterday, Umno-owned media Utusan Malaysia reported that Najib issued an ultimatum to his Cabinet regarding the 1MDB issue during its last meeting on Friday.

Mahathir also invited

Khairul said SukaGuam will also invite Mahathir along with 1,500 NGOs and activist leaders to the event which is scheduled take place on Friday morning at Dewan Tun Hussein Onn, PWTC.

"This is an open forum. If Mahathir comes, we will welcome him. I will invite him if he is yet to receive the invitation," he said.

Asked whether opposition politicians are also invited, Khairul said NGOs should be given

the platform as they have more impact and have legitimate questions for the prime minister.

"Before this, we have seen that national issues are only discussed by politicians. We could see that the NGOs are divided by their speciality and expertise. They could ask more honest and insightful questions," he said.

Khairul - who is also an Umno member - said this event could save Najib time from having to travel around the country explaining the issues.

"The NGOs we invited have a lot of members and supporters, so they will then explain it to the grassroots," he said.

Malaysiakini is trying to get confirmation of Najib's participation from his office.

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