

PAS says won't be joining in 'red shirts' demo

MalaysiaKini.com

Sept 8th, 2015

PAS will not be joining the 'red shirts' rally dubbed Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu scheduled for Sept 16 purportedly as a show of force to counter the recent Bersih 4 mammoth gathering.

Party secretary-general Takiyuddin Hassan said today the rally's planned date, which coincided with Malaysia Day was unsuitable for such an event.

"PAS believes that Malaysia Day must be celebrated as a freedom day for all Malaysians regardless of faith, race, culture, political stand, locality and others. The day is suppose to be inclusive and peaceful.

"In regards to that, PAS sees that the Sept 16 date to hold a rally that seems to cater only an exclusive group is not only unsuitable but goes against the Malaysian spirit," he said in a statement.

Takiyuddin (photo) also said PAS members were busy with their own People's Congress scheduled for Sept 12.

Yesterday, deputy inspector-general of police Noor Rashid Ibrahim said the Sept 16 rally by the group dubbed as the 'red shirts' was barred due to security reasons.

He added its organisers had not sought permission from the police as yet but no approval will be granted if they did.

However, he said that if the rally went ahead, police would monitor it.

"If the rally proceeds, the police will control it and ensure they do not disturb people or destroy property in the area," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

He said 2,000 police personnel would be deployed for crowd control during the rally.

Umno members to promote

The gathering is reportedly being planned to be held at the Bukit Bintang and Petaling Street areas in the capital and is backed by 500 Malay NGOs, Malaysian NGOs Coalition chairperson Jamal Md Yunos had told Utusan Malaysia.

Earlier today, Permatang Pauh Umno chief Zaidi Mohd Said said he was unfazed by the opposition from various quarters, including Umno's ally, MCA, to the proposed demonstration.

He pledged the support of Umno members towards promoting the rally.

“Each of us have our own responsibilities. (MCA Penang chief) Chew Mei Fun has a role to play too, to ensure that the Chinese community returns its support to BN,” Zaidi (photo) told Malaysiakini.

On Saturday, Otai Reformasi, a group of veteran activists, called on the police to block the planned 'red shirts' rally.

The group's spokesperson, Ronnie Liu, said while they respect the right to assemble, organisers of the Sept 16 rally have gone overboard by threatening violence.

Certain quarters have claimed the Bersih 4 rally on Augb 29 and 30 which among others called for the resignation of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, was a Chinese-dominated rally and an insult to the Malay community.

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