

15 investigation papers on red-shirts rally, says Zahid
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PARLIAMENT | The police are still writing up their investigations papers regarding the Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu 'red shirt rally' that took place last month, said Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He told Parliament in a written reply yesterday that once completed, the papers would be submitted to the deputy public prosecutors for advice and further instructions.

Overall, he said the police had received 26 police reports regarding the rally and as of Sept 17, had opened 15 investigation papers on the incident.

Among others, there is one investigation paper under Section 4(1)(c) of the Sedition Act 1948 for uttering words that have a seditious tendency.

There are also three investigations under Section 4(2)(f) of the Peaceful Assembly Act 2012 for bringing minors to an assembly and one investigation paper under Section 15(2) of the same act for violating the conditions for holding an assembly.

Furthermore, there are three investigations under Section 353 of the Penal Code for causing injury to a civil servant, one investigation under Section 148 of the Penal Code for possessing weapons at a riot and one investigation under Section 7(1) of the Corrosive Substances and Dangerous Weapons Act 1958 for possessing weapons.

Oddly enough, there is also one investigation under Section 379A of the Penal Code for motorcycle theft, and one investigation under Section 380 for theft from a building.

Zahid was responding to a question from Fong Kui Lun (DAP-Bukit Bintang), who asked about the status of police investigations regarding the fracas that took place outside Petaling Street during the rally and why the rally was officially allowed whereas the Bersih 4 rally two weeks earlier was not.

The so-called 'red-shirt' rally took place at Padang Merbok as a counter-demonstration against the Bersih 4 rally, the latter of which took place on Aug 29 and 30.

The stated aim of the Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu was to defend Malay dignity, and, despite the racial overtones, was largely peaceful except for the violence outside Petaling Street.

'Bersih did not fulfil conditions'

In the incident, a group of protesters tried to barge into the predominantly ethnic Chinese tourist hotspot, but was stopped by riot police who dispersed them with water cannons.

Three police personnel were injured in the incident, while three arrests were made.

To Fong's question as to why the rally was granted permission whereas the Bersih 4 rally was not, Zahid said it was because Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu had fulfilled the conditions of the PAA.

"The government has never stopped any rally held by any party as long as the rally fulfils the conditions set in the PAA and the rally does not jeopardise the security of the federation, or any part of it, or public order [...]"

"The police did not allow the Bersih 4 rally (photo) because it did not meet nor fulfil the conditions of the act, because the organisers refused to change the venue of the rally and insisted on holding it at a location where it is forbidden, and where there is no permission from the owners of the place or premises," he said.

The Bersih 4 rally was held on the streets surrounding Dataran Merdeka, whereas Dataran Merdeka itself was cordoned off to prepare for National Day celebrations.

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