

## **Zahid: Fake pictures used to smear red shirt rally**

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**Kow Gah Chie**

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today said there were attempts to smear the red shirt rally by spreading fake pictures through the social media.

"What went viral on social media were the edited banners (of the rally) from another place," he told the Dewan Rakyat while winding up Budget 2016.

"We have investigated... none of the (pictures of the) banners spread online came from the (red shirt rally)," he said.

"I am not accusing those who protested the red shirt (of smearing the rally). I was told by the police that (the controversial banners) did not come from red shirt rally," he said.

He, however, did not say what controversial banner he was referring to.

Zahid, who spoke in his capacity as home minister, cleared the red shirt rally, dubbed Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu, of being racist, despite the 'Cina babi' and 'keling' remarks hurled by the protesters.

"No sensitive and racist remarks and banners were made in the red shirt rally," he said.

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

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, while three arrests were made.

On Oct 21, Zahid had said in a parliamentary written reply that the police received 26 reports and had opened 15 investigation papers.

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.

## **Sept 16 rally objectives not clear**

Zahid denied the cops practised double standard for allowing red shirt rally while rejected Bersih 4 rally on August 29 and 30.

Earlier today, Teresa Kok (DAP-Seputeh) questioned the reason the government supported the Sept 16 rally when its objective was not clear.

She added that the martial art demonstration portrayed possible violence the protesters would have brought.

In contrast, Kok said, the objectives of the Bersih rally were spelled out clearly.

To this, Zahid said the cops had four previous experiences when dealing with Bersih rallies, while they have dealt with red shirt rally only for the first time.

"It is unfair to call the cops double standard. They (both rallies) have their own reasons. The best way is no rallies at all," he said.

Zahid then said Bersih and state governments ruled by Pakatan Harapan are the ones practising double standards.

These governments did not allow rallies in their states while Bersih refused to change the venue and did not abide by the 10-day notice from the cops, he added.

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