

**Organisers: May 13 rally not meant to provoke  
Malaysiakini.com  
May 11, 2010  
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Organisers of the Malay rights-themed mammoth rally set for May 13 in Kuala Terengganu, have brushed off the criticisms and brickbats, saying that they do not intend to provoke anyone.

Gerakan Kebangkitan Rakyat (Gertak), a loose coalition of Malay interest NGOs, insisted that the gathering is merely to remind the Malays to improve themselves in their economic and social standing, so that the bloodshed 41 years ago does not repeat itself.

may 13 books 121007Chairperson Razali Idris insisted that there is no malice, or any racial hatred behind the organisation of the half-day rally.

"We just want to remind the Malays that we are not better off. And the May 13 incident, propagated by irresponsible parties should never happen again. We just want to empower the Malays to work harder.

"We are not gathering to knock down, or insult other races. It is not our intention to threaten other races," he said when contacted by Malaysiakini.

He also slammed the numerous vitriol by other parties, saying that they do not understand the true spirit of the gathering.

"Maybe some really are confused with our message, and maybe some are out to sensationalise and scare non-Malays or make the public angry with us," he said.

Peaceful gathering

Gertak (which means 'scare' in Malay) also stressed that it will be a peaceful gathering.

stadium gong badak 020609"We will be inside one hall (the Gong Badak Indoor Stadium). We're not going to march anywhere. We have also told the police to arrest any troublemakers in the audience," he said.

When asked about the timing of the rally, which coincides with the anniversary of the bloodiest racial riots the country has ever seen, Razali said it is merely to remind the Malays of the black spot in the annals of history, and how race relations was at its lowest.

"Our message is for unity, not just among the Malays, but also with other races," he said.

Razali, despite being the deputy chairperson of the Marang division of Umno, stressed that the rally is apolitical.

"So what if I am in politics? I am organising this gathering wearing the hat of an NGO president. I am sure that there are also a lot of Pas members who are heading an NGO. "For this gathering, we are keeping the politics out," he said, adding that anyone who shows up in the gathering with flags of political parties will not be allowed in.

When asked whether he would extend the invitation to community leaders of other races, considering that the incident would be "safe" and "non-provocative", he said: "We will have

to discuss about it first."

"We're organising this in Kuala Terengganu, where Chinese people only make up five per cent. So it will be awkward to invite the president of MCA.

NONE"But we will definitely extend the invitation to him if we were to hold a similar function in Kuala Lumpur," he said.

More potshots

Meanwhile, the salvos continue with MCA president Chua Soi Lek (left) warning other BN component party leaders not to attend the gathering.

"MCA condemns such gathering. We feel that it would not serve any purpose, and it would only serve to remind Malaysians of the dark incident.

"All Malaysians have learned from the May 13 incident, I'm sure. We are all today be more multiracial in our look, more inclusive, moderate in our stand and supportive of the 1Malaysia concept," he said at a Press conference in Wisma MCA today.

PKR's Zaid Ibrahim also said that Prime Minister Najib Razak must move swiftly to stop "this irresponsible and dangerous action".

"Nothing useful will come out of such provocation other than spewing hate and threatening peace and stability.

"Whatever redress for the grievances the Malays are seeking , they can do so with the BN government since this same government that has governed them since Merdeka. There is absolutely no reason to blame anyone else," said the Pakatan Rakyat secretariat coordinator in an emailed statement.

While he also welcomed PAS' action in condemning the rally, he hoped that Malays will heed the call not to participate.

The voters in the Sibuluan by-election will hopefully see for themselves this behaviour of UMNO-led government and must punish the PM for allowing this to happen," charged Zaid.

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/131545>