

UiTM bans 'Student Power'
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Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) has clamped down on a scheduled talk by a young filmmaker on the students activism movement of the 1960's.

psm independence forum 300807 fahmi rezaFahmi Reza (right) and the organisers had planned the talk at UiTM's campus at Puncak Perdana yesterday evening when they suddenly found themselves barred.

One of the organisers, a UiTM student, said his lecturer called him yesterday morning to inform him that he could not hold the talk as he did not receive permission from the university.

"My lecturer and the Student Affairs Department caught wind of the function and they told me to stop it," said the student, who wanted to remain anonymous for fear of repercussions.

He said that students and lecturers were required to write to the university's Student Affairs Department for permission if they wanted to invite an "outsider" as a guest to varsity functions.

However, he did not do so in this case as he expected the talk to be a small affair just amongst his friends from the various faculties.

"Maybe the title of the talk 'Student Power' worried them," he told Malaysiakini.

Resourceful students

Unfazed by the objections, the organisers pressed on with the function anyway.

They postponed the event from 5pm to 6.30pm to inform the participants about the eleventh hour change of plans, and held it outside the campus.

Pooling together RM100, the resourceful students rented a small hall at Kompleks Belia dan Kebudayaan Negeri Selangor in Seksyen 7, 20km from the campus.

According to the filmmaker Fahmi, the talk eventually attracted only 30 participants, who "braved the various obstacles and problems (posed) by the university".

NONE"With all the talk recently by the Deputy Higher Education Minister Saifuddin Abdullah (right) about allowing students to get involved in politics, it is obvious that the university administration is still insistent on controlling the type of politics and history (students are exposed to)," said Fahmi.

The young filmmaker has been making waves with his documentaries which are often themed on history and activism, such as 'Sepuluh Tahun Sebelum Merdeka' (10 Years Before Independence) and 'Revolusi '48' ('48 Revolution).

His 'Student Power' public lecture series is based on his ongoing research about the autonomy and vibrancy of the student movement in the country during the 1960's, before the advent of the University and University Colleges Act.

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