

Activist fights for 'Student Power' lecture at UM
Malaysiakini.com
August 17, 2010

Activist filmmaker Fahmi Reza is determined to hold his series of lectures on the heydays of student activism in the 60s at Universiti Malaya (UM), despite being repeatedly barred.

psm independence forum 300807 fahmi rezaFahmi (left) expressed his disappointment over the university administration's decision to reject his recent fourth attempt at holding his 'Student Power' lecture, but is unfazed.

"I am disappointed that my attempt to bring this academic lecture, (which is about) UM's history itself, has been barred," he told Malaysiakini.

"However, I've launched a 'Student Power' campaign to get as many students as possible to submit proposals to the Students Affairs Department and the vice-chancellor."

"I've already made templates to make it easier for the students. All they have to do is fill in the blanks and submit the proposals."

True to his defiant nature, he said that he will make another attempt to organise the lecture even if the campaign fails.

A search for a venue in the UM campus for the lecture has also kicked off on Facebook.

Fahmi has directed several documentaries such as 'Sepuluh Tahun Sebelum Merdeka' (10 Years Before Independence) and 'Revolusi '48' (1948 Revolution) that courted controversy due to their historical and activist themes.

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

Malaysiakini blamed

The dean of the Arts and Social Science Faculty Mohammad Redzuan Othman had allegedly given a verbal agreement to several History Society students to hold the lecture, scheduled for Aug 24 in UM.

The dean however changed his mind on Aug 12.

"I think it might have something to do with Malaysiakini's article on Universiti Teknologi Mara's earlier ban," Fahmi said..

NONERedzuan had allegedly allowed the students to print posters and asked them to invite other heads of faculty Fahmi also claimed that the dean had been willing to officially open the lecture.

Two UM student union leaders active in the 1960s, Khong Kim Hoong and Syed Hamid Ali, had already been invited to speak during the lecture as well.

Despite repeated attempts, Malaysiakini could not reach Redzuan for comments.

The self-taught graphic artist turned director felt that this was an issue that concerned the public at large.

"Public universities belong to the public. Taxpayers pay the lecturers and for the facilities. It's our money, not the government's," said Fahmi.

"We can't take this as (just) a students' issue in campus, because the universities are educating our brothers, sisters and children."

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/140357>