

Gaps' Shah Alam rally tomorrow a rehearsal
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The anti-state government group Gagasan Anti Penyelewengan Selangor (Gaps) is treating the rally to present the memorandum to the Selangor Sultan tomorrow as a rehearsal to Sunday's demonstration.

NONThe group's leader, Hamidzun Khairuddin (centre, without headband), said that tomorrow's event will indicate how strong their turn-up will be for Sunday's march to the Istana Negara from Masjid Jamek.

"Tomorrow is a working day. If we can get 2,000 people, I believe we can get at least double or triple that on Sunday," he said.

The scene seems set for a Sunday showdown between Gaps, garbed in black shirts, and supporters of the Selangor government, in red shirts.

Gaps aims to submit a memorandum calling on the Agong to initiate a probe into 30 cases of alleged misconduct by the Selangor government while their opponents plan to appeal to the King to assist in the state's efforts to acquire water concessionaire, Syabas.

azlan On the issue of a police permit for Sunday's event, the 'black shirts' are depending on their constitutional guarantee of freedom of movement , but have also arranged a meeting with the police officers tomorrow.

"We will discuss what are the do's and don'ts, but our ultimate intent is just to present the memorandum to the Ruler," he told Malaysiakini.

On the question of their being only allowed to present the memorandum without the crowd, Hamidzun said he will negotiate the matter with the authorities.

"Our people will definitely gather inside the mosque. You don't need a permit to go into a mosque," he quipped.

"But if they don't want us to rally, we will try to negotiate with them the conditions for doing so without breaking the laws," he added.

The self-proclaimed NGO representative is also optimistic that their Sunday encounter with the pro-state government group will not see any untoward incident.

"I think our society is mature enough. Somehow we are presenting our case, and they want to present theirs," said Hamidzun.

Security for Sunday rally

In the meantime, the state government will be mobilising 500 people including their own communication body (Pikom) for security and traffic at the rally this Sunday.

bagan pinang by election 061009 badrul amin baharom speechIn anticipation of a possible clash with Gaps, campaign coordinator Badrul Amin Bahrom (left) said that the pro-state government marshals will not just ensure the security of MB Khalid Ibrahim, but also of everyone.

When speaking to Malaysiakini, Badrul Amin also reminded the demonstrators to be calm and not to antagonise the "black shirts".

Badrul Amin - also a PKR central leadership committee member - said that neither the police nor the palace have contacted them about the gathering.

"We didn't receive any feedback. We just want to make our feelings known. It may also be awkward for them to respond to us," he said.

Supporting the move, Selangor senior executive councillor Teresa Kok urged the people to come out together to the march in support of the Air for the Rakyat petition.

Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad said, "We hope the people will come to this walk with the MB programme. We hope the authorities will not stop the march which is the people's democratic right."

Meanwhile, according to Bernama, Menteri Besar Khalid (right) said today he welcomed the memorandum Gaps planned to hand over to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong concerning alleged abuses by the state government.

Khalid said Gaps had the right to take such an action but it had to be prepared for the consequences if there was no truth to its accusations.

"We (Selangor government) will not hesitate to take legal action against them if they defame us," he told reporters in Shah Alam.

He also said that if Gaps was truly concerned about abuses, it should join a Selangor delegation which would also be handing over a memorandum to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong at Istana Negara the same day about alleged abuses by water industry players in the state.

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