

Syed Hamid: Fuel price won't go down
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Street demonstrations against the fuel price hikes will lead only to further hardships for people caught up in the inconvenience that accompanies such gatherings, said Home Affairs Minister Syed Hamid Syed Jaafar Albar.
MCPX

syed hamid albar 170608 talking "The fuel prices are not going to go down. The thing is going to be there. We need to do some adjustments. By going into the streets, they are causing hardships to other people. The majority of the people would like to go on with their lives," said Syed Hamid.

"Under the difficult circumstances, we need to adjust our lives. We need to prioritise (certain aspects of) our lives... Going onto the streets just for political gain (and) to show they are the champions (of the people is not the way)."

Groups claiming to uphold the public interest can help more by "working together" with the government in alleviating the difficulties, he said.

Speaking at a press conference after officiating the Asean 8th Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crimes in Kuala Lumpur, he was commenting on the mammoth anti-fuel hike gathering planned next month by opposition parties and NGOs.

In an expected but still unpopular move, the government had increased petrol and diesel prices by 40.6 and 63.3 percent respectively from June 5, due to sky-rocketing global oil prices.

petrol price hike protest kg baru sogo 130608 Following this, groups such as the Coalition Against Inflation (Protes) and the People's Anti-Oil Manipulation Movement (Geramm) kicked off a series of demonstrations.

A road show has also started. In addition to getting one million signatures to petition the government to rescind the price hikes and undertake more measures to alleviate problems, this aims at mobilising a record one million people to demonstrate on July 5.

Last Friday, 2,000 people marched in protest on the streets of Kuala Lumpur, from the Masjid Jamek Kampung Baru to the headquarters of Islamic opposition party PAS.

Crime rate 'will go up'

Syed Hamid, however, said there are other ways of expressing discontent against the government and its policies, such as through the general election and other "democratic practices".

"I don't think we should import this culture of demonstrations. You can't replace the government through demonstrations," he said.

Earlier in his speech, Syed Hamid said the spiraling prices of food, fuel and other

commodities in the region is leading to the decrease of real incomes and causing hardships and social unrest.

human trafficking woman sex workersHe also warned that the global economic downturn fueled by housing and financial problems in the US may lead to an increase in transnational crimes such as terrorism, human trafficking, money laundering, and cyber- and economic crimes.

Expanding on this, Syed Hamid told reporters it is a generally accepted principle that, as economic situations worsen, "people look for alternative ways in order to earn a living (including) criminally".

"Many of the syndicates that operate internationally operate from poor countries that operate internationally. The chief may come from a rich country, but they utilise and take advantage of people from the poor countries to be sources or agents to operate on the transnational front," he said.

The same scenario can be expected on the domestic front - if a lot of people are unemployed, the crime rate will be higher than usual, he warned.

As such, the economic factors functioning as the 'supply' side of national and transnational crimes should be examined together with enforcement and preventive aspects, he added.

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