

DPM: Some itching to be held under ISA
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The rally against the Internal Security Act (ISA) in Kuala Lumpur last Saturday was aimed at provoking the police into invoking the law which allowed for detention without trial, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

"The police are now handling the matter. They can take whatever action they see fit (against the organisers of the rally) but some people want to provoke the police to ensure they are detained under the ISA. Then, they can say, 'See, I told you'," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

Muhyiddin said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak himself has given an assurance that the act would be reviewed, and we are in the process of reviewing it.

"The present government has released many who were detained under the act. There was no reason for the rally, actually. It was politically motivated," he added.

He said since an assurance was already given by the top leader in the government, there was no need for the opposition to take to the streets of Kuala Lumpur to champion its cause.

"We need to give a chance for the act to be amended, although it would take a bit of time. It has only been four months since the prime minister took office.

"We need to consult all relevant parties for the amendment to be proper. The opposition just need to be a bit patient," he said.

"The fact that we want to review the act shows that we are responsive to the wishes of the people. But the opposition is using this to their advantage.

"Any demonstration is not going to solve any problem. We have the parliament and the government is elected by the majority," he added.

Eleven politicians to be quizzed

Muhyiddin said there are various avenues to air grouses but demonstration is certainly not one of them, especially after the prime minister has assured that the act would be reviewed.

In a related development, the police said 11 political leaders suspected of being behind the rally will be called in for questioning.

Yesterday, a coalition of pro-ISA non-governmental organisations urged the police to detain Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang and DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang under the security law.

The protest saw tens of thousands taking to the streets, with the police firing tear gas and water cannons. Nearly 600 people were arrested, including PKR vice-president R Sivarasa, who has since been freed on police bail.

Yesterday, a total of 29 people were charged for illegal assembly and breaching the Societies Act.

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