

PM - Protestors From Both Sides of the Divide to Face the Law
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Kuala Terengganu - There is no escaping stern action from the police for anyone breaking the law irrespective of whether they are for or against the government, said Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak. He said this was because police were responsible for protecting the public from those out to disrupt peace and harmony and that the government had suggested the use of stadiums to parties that wanted to hold illegal street demonstrations in the federal capital today.

He said these parties could have gathered at stadiums and make their demands known peacefully.

"That was a good offer from the government. Now if action is taken, the persons involved will have to face the consequences irrespective of whether they are for or against the government," he told reporters after giving away prizes to the winners of Barisan Nasional Elected Representatives' Wives Sports Meet at the State Stadium here today.

Najib said this when asked to comment on the arrests of several senior leaders of the opposition, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and Umno supreme council member Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim for participating in illegal street demonstrations in Kuala Lumpur earlier today.

Among the others arrested were the organiser of the Bersih 2.0 illegal rally S. Ambiga, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang, PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu, Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) vice-presidents Fuziah Salleh and Tian Chua and two vice-presidents of PAS, Mahfuz Omar and Salahuddin Ayub.

The prime minister said he hoped that those involved realise that Malaysians did not like street demonstrations as there were many other ways to voice their demands.

Not dismissing the possibility that the arrests of the opposition leaders would be used to tarnish the image of the police, Najib said: "We expect this will be made an issue. That is why they wanted to have a confrontation with the police, so that they can say the police are cruel and brutal."

Certain media, particularly that of the opposition would take advantage of the situation to blow up the arrests and the illegal demonstrations to show the people they had wide support when in fact the number of demonstrators did not even reach 10,000, he said.

Commenting on the spread of an SMS stating Parliament would be dissolved on Monday purportedly issued by the Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama), Najib said it was an irresponsible action purposely done to create confusion among the people.

"This is normal in a situation like this (when illegal demonstrations are held) and during elections, the people must understand that these are baseless rumours and are also spread through e-mail and social websites," he said.

Bernama today had denied that it had sent the SMS on the dissolution of Parliament.

(Bernama)

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