

PM: Decide Through Ballot Paper and Not by Staging Street Demos
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KUALA LUMPUR -- The government will defend the democratic system and is not afraid of facing the opposition in the general election, Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak said today. The people would be allowed to decide, through the ballot paper and not by staging street demonstrations, he said when addressing 6,000 people at an information session at the Putra World Trade Centre, here.

The audience comprised representatives of Umno, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government-linked companies (GLCs). Also present were Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin, Umno vice-presidents Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Shafie Apdal, Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, Umno information chief Ahmad Maslan, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and Wanita Umno chief Shahrizat Abdul Jalil.

Najib, who is Umno president and Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, reminded Malaysians not to subscribe to the culture of street demonstrations, saying the country upheld the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

"We dislike chaos. We like peace. We like a country where the people live in harmony. We prefer a country where our life in the future will be better than what it is today.

Najib explained that the gathering today was not a show of force but to demonstrate that the silent majority was strong and was with the government.

He said the government, particularly Umno, could mobilise its supporters in bigger numbers than the street demonstrators, but Umno did not wish to do so. Najib said the organiser of yesterday's Bersih 2.0 illegal rally and the opposition had wanted to portray Malaysia's as an undemocratic government in the eyes of the world.

The organiser of the rally had also gone back on their word, he said, adding that they agreed at first to abide by the advice of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and call off the illegal rally but they went ahead with it.

"They said they wanted to hold a peaceful rally. If the police had not monitored it, it would not have been peaceful," he said.

The prime minister said they went ahead with the rally to show the world that the Malaysian government was undemocratic, did not have any regard for laws and human rights, was biased and did not respect the opposition. He said it would not come as a surprise if the staging of the rally was disseminated on YouTube and through the international media.

Najib said the online media had been critical of the government but their websites were not shut down.

He said Umno and the BN were the real champions of the democratic system.

(Bernama)

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