

Mob Disruption Of ABU-Hindraf Forum Condemned
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Aliran is horrified and outraged by the recent incident when a mob provocatively gate-crashed a peaceful forum organised by Anything But Umno (ABU)-Hindraf in Klang.

This incident should be condemned by all right-thinking members of our society.

The youthful-looking group's violent and rowdy disruption of the peaceful forum is disturbing and alarming, all the more so when their blatant hooliganism did not receive a prompt response from the police force. In fact, Selangor police chief Tun Hisan Tun Hamzah even reportedly denied there had been any violent incidents that night.

It is feared that the apparent lack of prompt and appropriate action by the police in this matter may send a wrong signal to this disruptive group and others similarly inclined: that it is okay for them to disrupt peaceful gatherings of people exercising their democratic right to discuss ideas and opinions in a peaceful and civilised manner. It might also be misconstrued that that the mob had been sanctioned by the authorities to behave so atrociously.

To dispel any such notion, the powers-that-be must in no uncertain terms denounce this unruly and aggressive behaviour immediately. The longer the delay in coming up with such a response, the more difficult it would be for the police to convince the public that they mean business in dealing with unruly groups that take the law into their own hands.

Such violent and extreme behaviour has no place in a democratic society and cannot be tolerated — especially when the prime minister in a recent international conference reminded people of the virtue of moderation in our everyday lives. It is important to make it explicitly clear that we practise what we preach; otherwise we will come across as a hypocritical society in the eyes of the international community.

Besides, it is incumbent upon the prime minister and the police to promote the idea that if you disagree with someone over a certain issue, the only course of action in a democratic and moderate society is to engage in civilised debate and hold a discussion with those with whom you disagree.

Aliran is encouraged that the police now seem to be taking action to apprehend those who displayed such shameful conduct, which could threaten our peace and harmony. We are happy that the thug who played such a prominent and aggressive role in this disruption and who has been positively identified has been detained by the police.

They should be charged under the harshest law as an example to others that hooligans cannot be allowed to roam freely, taking the law into their hands without suffering the consequence of their rowdyism.

Aliran calls upon the authorities to bring the culprits to justice and send a clear message to them and others so inclined that such violent reactions to the issues of the day can never be tolerated in a country that upholds the rule of law.

ALIRAN

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