

**Najib Must Reverse Course On Bersih 3.0**  
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**By Lim Kit Siang**

The question all Malaysians and the world are asking is: What "Malaysia as world's best democracy" is Prime Minister Najib Razak talking about when his government is so mortally afraid of Malaysians peacefully gathering at Dataran Merdeka for a two-hour "sit-in" calling for free, fair and clean elections?

The volte face by the Home Minister, Hishammuddin Hussein from the earlier position of Bersih 3.0 not being a national security problem to its becoming "a security issue", the threat of police harassment and other actions including mass arrests tomorrow, the locking-down of Dataran Merdeka and the court order secured by the police barring Bersih 3.0 from the vicinity of Dataran Merdeka for four days, are not symptomatic of an administration brimming with confidence that "the era of the government knows best is over" and wants to usher in a political transformation to make Malaysia "the best democracy in the world" but the very opposite.

If the Najib premiership had fully learnt from the lessons of the gross and disastrous mishandling of the Bersih 2.0 peaceful rally for free, fair and clean elections on July 9, 2011, which dealt body blows to Najib and Malaysia's national and international image, the government would have facilitated the successful holding of the Bersih 3.0 peaceful "sit-in" protest at Dataran Merdeka tomorrow.

The organisers of the "428" Bersih 3.0 "sit-in" protest at Dataran Merdeka, together with Malaysians regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, age or gender enthusiastically supporting the Bersih 3.0 idea, have made a clear and unequivocal commitment that the call for free, fair and clean elections would be a historic but a peaceful one – in fact highlighting the greatest Malaysian assets in uniting diverse races, religions, languages, cultures and regions in one great common national and universal cause.

Why can't the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the police and all relevant government agencies chip in and partner the Bersih 3.0 organisers to facilitate and ensure the success of the Bersih 3.0 peaceful "sit-in" demonstration at Dataran Merdeka in support of free, fair and clean elections – which could be celebrated nationally and internationally as the coming-of-age of Malaysia in a genuine democratic transformation 55 years after independent nationhood?

With full co-operation and partnership between the Bersih 3.0 organisers and the powers of the state, the two-hour peaceful Bersih 3.0 "sit-in" can only be a success to the great credit of the country and the government of the day – as their co-operation will foil all attempts by trouble-makers out to disrupt the peaceful holding of the "sit in".

With 18 hours to go before the Bersih 3.0 "sit-in" at Dataran Merdeka tomorrow, it is not too late for Najib to reverse course and to direct the Home Minister, the police and the Kuala Lumpur City Hall to give full co-operation to partner and facilitate the successful and peaceful holding of the Bersih 3.0 "sit in" for clean, free and fair elections at Dataran Merdeka tomorrow.

LIM KIT SIANG - 27th April 2012

(The views expressed above belongs to the author in its entirety and does not represent the opinion of Malaysian Mirror in any way)