

Attention Should Be On Escalating Political Thuggery
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By Lim Kit Siang

As Home Minister, Hishammuddin Hussein should give personal attention to escalating cases of political thuggery and violence in the country like the vicious attacks on DAP Selangor State Committee member V. Ganapathirao and his brother Papparaidu in Klang on Wednesday night instead of propaganda concerns like the official video compilation on Bersih 3.0.

On Thursday, Hishammuddin said that a video compilation, containing footage of what transpired during the Bersih 3.0 rally last April 28, would be ready within two days and would be uploaded on the ministry's website once it was ready.

He said it would contain "the good, bad and ugly" visuals received from many parties throughout the rally.

Would the official video compilation on the Home Ministry website contain all the available "ugly" videos of all the cases of brutality and violence which happened on Bersih 3.0, regardless of whether the victims were police personnel, media representatives or peaceful protestors or would it only be a very selective compilation as the latest in the official campaign of vilification and demonization of Bersih 3.0?

Malaysians are very wary of this official campaign of demonization of Bersih 3.0, both over government television channels and the Internet in the past month, completely ignoring the fact that Bersih 3.0 was a great historic awakening of a quarter of a million Malaysians, regardless of race, religion, class, region, age or gender, gathering peacefully for a common national cause but which was marred by incidents of brutality and violence involving a small number of police personnel and peaceful protestors.

Why is Hishammuddin giving top priority to this video compilation of what transpired during Bersih 3.0, when these videos should be furnished to the Suhakam inquiry into Bersih 3.0 to establish what actually happened on April 28?

Or could it be that Hishammuddin does not have absolute confidence in the Hanif "independent advisory panel" that he has decided unilaterally to upload on the Home Ministry website his video compilation of what transpired on Bersih 3.0 instead of submitting them to the Hanif panel?

Be that as it may, I call on Hishammuddin to act responsibly as Home Minister in two regards:

Firstly, to accede to legitimate public demands for the dissolution of the Hanif inquiry panel and government and police giving fully support to the Suhakam inquiry; and the submission of the video compilation to the Suhakam inquiry; and

Secondly, to give personal attention to escalating cases of political thuggery and violence in the country like the vicious attacks on Ganapathirao and Papparaidu in Klang on Wednesday night.

It is clear that the attack on the two was politically motivated, related to their successful organization and holding of the Indraf 2.0 rally in Brickfields in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday.

Ganapathirao suffered nasal bone fracture, swollen jaw and several bruises while Papparaidu had more serious injuries, with a broken right arm and a shoulder dislocated.

The escalation of the political culture of aggression, thuggery and violence in recent weeks, with Pakatan Rakyat figures and functions as the targets, must be deplored and condemned in the strongest possible terms – not only by the Pakatan Rakyat but also by the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and all Barisan Nasional leaders.

I had suggested that the Prime Minister, Najib Razak should convene an all-party conference to end this escalating and unbecoming political culture.

DAP and Pakatan Rakyat are prepared to play our role to end this political culture of aggression, thuggery and violence.

What is the response of the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, UMNO and Barisan Nasional leaders to this overture?

Or do they want to see the further escalation of political culture of this nature in Malaysia?

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