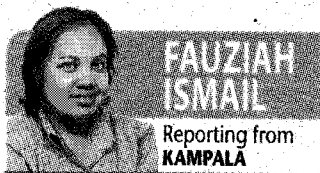


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# Action against three due to statements, says PM

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POLICE did not move in on the leaders of the Hindu Rights Action Force because of their planned rally in Kuala Lumpur today but it was their statements that landed them in trouble, the prime minister said.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is also the Internal Security Minister, said police had been monitoring their speeches and talks and found the remarks could be seditious in nature.

"When they are wrong, they are wrong," Abdullah told Malaysian newsmen covering the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) here.

"If we do not take action, there will be public outrage.

"There are many who are not happy with the statements made."

Asked about the rising trend of taking to the streets, Abdullah said: "What can we do if this is the choice that they make? We're not a country that suppresses the voice of the people.

"There are ways of doing things. They can take part in the elections, undertake campaigns, air their opinions and plead for votes.

"In past general elections, we have not stopped any registered party from taking part, whether it is the general election or a by-election."

Hindraf leaders P. Uthayakumar, his brother P. Waytha Moorthy and V. Ganabathirau were charged in the Klang Sessions Court on Friday under the Sedition Act.

The three men were charged with making seditious remarks during their speeches in Batang



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi meeting Malaysian newsmen at a press conference in Kampala yesterday after attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

Beljuntai on Nov 16. They were ordered to return to court on Monday for mention.

While Uthayakumar and Ganabathirau posted bail, Waytha Moorthy declined as a mark of protest. Police took him away to be placed in detention at the Sungai Buloh prison.

The group is planning to hold a rally today outside the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur in support of a class-action suit against the British government for bringing Indians to Malaysia as indentured workers, for exploiting them for 150 years and for failing to protect their rights.

The rally is also to petition Queen Elizabeth II for a Queen's Counsel to argue the case for the Indian community in the suit,

which was filed on Aug 30 in Britain.

The sum sought is £4 trillion (RM27.7 trillion) in compensation for the community from the British government.

In Alor Star, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the government had never prevented people from raising their concerns but they must do so without breaking the law.

"If they want to hold a gathering, they must get a police permit.

"If they cannot get the permit, then they cannot hold the meeting," he told reporters after launching the "Karnival Usahawan Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia" yesterday.

Najib also said the action against the lawyers was not about

today's proposed rally but over the speeches they made.

"If a speech can create anger among the races, action will be taken against the speaker."

In Kuantan, Deputy Internal Security Minister Datuk Fu Ah Kiow warned that there would be no leniency for those who turn up for the gathering today.

Police will arrest them and also take action against those who invite people to participate using the short messaging service (SMS).

"Do not challenge the police and blame them when you are arrested," he told reporters after visiting the Tanjung Lumpur state assemblyman's service centre. He said police knew about the seditious SMSes and would trace the senders.