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Many let down by no-show at event The Star

KUALA LUMPUR: They came in droves, expecting to hear both sides of the IMDB story but came away disappointed and angry.

Many in the 2,000-strong crowd were unhappy with Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's no-show after he was advised against it by the police while others were upset because Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was stopped midway into his speech.

While some in the audience were staunch supporters of either the Prime Minister or Dr Mahathir, most were there to get a better insight into the country's hottest political issue.

"We are not angry, we are disappointed," said Mohd Ridzuan Abdullah of Pertubuhan Ikatan

Usahawan Kecil dan Sederhana Malaysia (Ikhlas).

He said Ikhlas had sent more than 20 letters seeking a chance to meet the Prime Minister to listen to his explanations but had received no response from his office.

"The people are more comfortable to explain their grouses to NGOs who can serve as the eyes and ears for the people.

"We are not blaming the Prime Minister but we feel that some officers are not allowing some of the more vocal NGOs enough opportunities to meet him and tell him what the people are feeling."

Siti Farah Abu Hassan said she was there to find out more about IMDB and the issues surrounding it.

"I don't belong to any NGO. I

came as a concerned citizen.

"I feel let down that it's cancelled but hope there will be other opportunities," she said.

Others went online to express their disappointment that the event did not go ahead as planned.

Activist Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir questioned the need to cancel the event on Twitter.

"Well well well if @KBAB51 can't handle security for an event with @NajibRazak, what good is he," Marina said, with @KBAB51 referring to the Twitter handle of the Inspector-General of Police.

"And what sort of security threat was it? People booing? But that has happened before, no," she asked.

The Tunku Mahkota of Johor, Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim, remind-

ed leaders to reflect on themselves.

"For those who have been entrusted with the responsibility, do not blame the people for losing confidence and trust in you, but think of why they no longer have the confidence and trust in you," he said in a posting on the Johor Southern Tigers football team's Facebook page.

Tunku Ismail's post was removed several hours later.

However, with no explanation, the post went up again on the JFA page, complete with visuals, at about 7pm.

SukaGuam chairman Datuk Khairul Anwar Rahmat blamed a wave of unregistered latecomers for the congestion at the event which turned ugly.