

Najib endorses silat groups despite their threat to Bersih
The Malaysian Insider
July 07, 2011
By Boo Su-Lyn

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak has described silat and other self-defence exponents as the third line of defence in the country, including a group that has threatened to wage war against electoral reforms movement Bersih 2.0.



Datuk Seri Najib Razak (centre), Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (left) and Tan Sri Omardin Mauju at PSSLM's 50th anniversary. — Picture by Boo Su-Lyn

The Pertubuhan Seni Silat Lincah Malaysia (PSSLM) had challenged Bersih for its refusal to abandon a planned rally on July 9 to call for free and fair elections.

"I believe if there are evil enemies who want to attack the country from without and within, 'anak-anak lincah' will rise to fight them," said Najib in a fiery speech last night.

"But tonight, we do not gather to fight," added the prime minister. "We do not gather to wield the keris (dagger). We gather for the loyalty and unity of our country."

Najib pointed out that there were non-Malays at the event last night, although silat was a Malay martial art.

"We do not fight the non-Malays. We embrace them as fellow citizens," said Najib.

PSSLM Mahaguru (grandmaster) Tan Sri Omardin Mauju said last month that silat exponents were Malaysia's third line of defence after the police and the army.

In his threat to Bersih, Omardin said: "We maintain our stand to go to 'war' if they still want to proceed with this illegal rally. If it happens, I cannot guarantee I can control the emotions of my members because they have been taught to act when faced with opposition."

Police have locked down the capital city and asked residents to bear with the inconveniences as they are looking for weapons that have allegedly been stashed away by unknown people.

Despite a royal audience and Najib's earlier assurance that the Bersih rally could be held in a stadium, the police have told polls watchdog Bersih to apply for a permit for the event.

Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Khalid Abu Bakar also warned that police would arrest people wearing Bersih T-shirts or found to have pro-Bersih materials as the organization was still considered illegal.

Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin stepped in on Sunday to defuse tension over the clampdown by advising the Najib administration and Bersih 2.0 to hold consultations over the issue of free and fair elections.

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider.

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/najib-endorses-silat-groups-despite-their-threat-to-bersih/>