

IGP Says Car Park For Peaceful Assembly Can Only Accommodate 5,000 People
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7 (Bernama) -- The car park opposite the Jalan Duta Court Complex here, the proposed site for a peaceful assembly on Monday can only accommodate about 5,000 people, and once the place is filled, latecomers would be asked to disperse said the Inspector-General of Police, Tan Sri Ismail Omar.

He said no one would be allowed to congregate elsewhere for the same purpose other than the designated car park which had been sought by the organisers and approved by the Sentul police.

In a briefing for media editors at the Bukit Aman police headquarters here Saturday, Ismail stressed that there was no blanket approval for other parts of the country apart from the car park opposite the court complex here.

The assembly is being planned to coincide with a High Court decision in a sodomy case involving Opposition Leader and PKR adviser Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who has been charged with sodomising a former aide, Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan, on June 26, 2008.

He said although there had been 740 police reports against the proposed assembly, the police decided to allow it in the spirit of the new Peaceful Assembly Bill, which was passed by both houses of Parliament recently.

As such, he advised organisers to adhere to the conditions set by the police and which had been agreed upon at their meeting that lasted for about one and a half hours here.

Ismail said the police, who are monitoring the situation in the country and comments in the cyberspace, might meet the organisers again Sunday to ensure that they fully understood the conditions set for Monday's assembly.

Other than the conditions for the car park location as the venue and dispersing once the place is filled, the other requirements include banning the use of the "Free Anwar 901" or "Free Anwar" taglines on pamphlets and banners and making speeches at the venue.

The organisers are allowed to use only two loud hailers for crowd control and they must also ensure that participants do not cause any nuisance or disturb the peace that might affect the court's proceedings.

Besides disallowing the carrying of weapons, the participants must also disperse within an hour after the court has announced its verdict.

Ismail hoped that the participants would be responsible, act in good faith and would not resort to anything that would jeopardise the country, which was experiencing a relatively strong economy and drop in crime rate of late. Ismail said every Malaysian had a role to play to ensure public order in the country and it was not the responsibility of the police alone.

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