

Perkasa: UUCA not important enough to justify protests
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 3 — Malay rights NGO Perkasa said today undergraduates should not be demonstrating against the controversial Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA) as it is not as important as poverty or the threat of communism.

President Datuk Ibrahim Ali told reporters the students should not copy undergraduates from 40 years ago when he was “the biggest organiser of street protests” as the government has already announced it would amend the law in March to allow students to join political parties.

“In the 1970s, we only had two universities, the economy was not growing, poverty was high, the New Economic Policy had only just begun and the communist threat was still there. We fought against starvation, we demonstrated for reasonable causes.

“If it is just UUCA, then it is not proper. UUCA and even the Internal Security Act (ISA) are not obstacles for student movement,” the Pasir Mas MP said.

Ibrahim (picture) said he never used these laws as excuses as “fighters must be prepared to take the risk.”

“When I was detained under the ISA, I never questioned it. If you dare to do it, then dare to take responsibility,” he said.

Students and opposition politicians claim several undergraduates were beaten at an academic freedom rally in Tanjung Malim on late Saturday — after failing to disperse on police orders.

The demonstration followed widespread controversy after Adam Adli Abd Halim, a 21-year UPSI student, lowered a banner bearing the likeness of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak outside Umno’s headquarters here last month.

Safwan Anang, who was hospitalised after the protest which was broken up by police at about 2.30am, claimed he was punched in the face and kneed in the ribs by policemen when trying to help a friend who was “being dragged” by police.

The Universiti Malaya student was allegedly assaulted and lost consciousness in the 2.30am fracas which saw 17 students arrested.

But Perak police denied assaulting student activists during the peaceful demonstration at UPSI, saying there was “no scuffle” when arrests were made.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein also denied claims on Twitter that there was police brutality, saying they were untrue.

Ibrahim added today that students now had other means besides street protests to express their opinion and engage with authorities.

"Now there are many halls and venues in campuses. There is no need to act wildly.

"There are so many media they can engage with like Harakah, Suara Keadilan and even YouTube," he said, referring to opposition organs and the online video-sharing portal respectively.

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