

PKR rejects police conditions for Monday rally
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7 — PKR said today it does not accept conditions set by police for Monday's public rally as they were only outlined after the party had obtained police permission to gather in support of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim when the court here rules on his sodomy trial.

PKR deputy president Azmin Ali said in a statement PKR "will adopt the agreement with Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Mohamad Salleh that was agreed and announced after the meeting on Friday."

File photo of Azmin (right) shaking hand with Mohamad Salleh after their meeting on January 6, 2012. — Picture by Choo Choy May

"The agreement does not touch on the conditions announced later by police. Therefore, I repeat my call to the public to come and show solidarity with Anwar... in line with the right to gather in a peaceful assembly as enshrined in the federal constitution," the Gombak MP said.

Sentul police had issued 10 conditions last night, barring participants supporting Opposition Leader Anwar from "making noise" and disallowing any speeches from being made.

The conditions also bar participants from carrying any banners to support the PKR de facto leader at the gathering which is being held as the High Court here delivers its verdict in the highly-charged Sodomy II trial.

The police had met a PKR delegation yesterday morning before deciding to allow the rally to go ahead in the parking area of the Jalan Duta court complex.

No conditions were mentioned by Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Mohamad Salleh during a brief, joint press conference with PKR after their meeting.

PKR leaders have also said no conditions were set during the meeting.

"The police have granted us permission to have our assembly at the Jalan Duta parking lot, right in front of the court entrance," PKR Youth chief Shamsul Iskandar Mat Akin told The Malaysian Insider after leaving the Kuala Lumpur police headquarters.

But Sentul police issued the conditions yesterday evening after "considering safety and public order factors."

Among the other conditions mentioned in the Facebook posting are that the public must disperse one hour after the verdict; and that the organisers are only allowed to use two loudhailers for the purpose of crowd control.

Azmin had announced on Tuesday that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) will be amassing a rally of over 100,000 people in a show of support for Anwar when the court finally rules on the

two-year-long sodomy trial.

He also guaranteed yesterday the mass rally will be peaceful.

Anwar, 64, is charged with sodomising former male aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan at a condominium in upscale Damansara Heights here in June 2008, a few months before returning from a decade in the political wilderness and winning back his Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat.

This represents the second time he has been prosecuted for sodomy.

If found guilty, he could spend up to 20 years behind bars but will escape the caning penalty as he is over 60. It would effectively spell the end of his political career and his chance to be prime minister.

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