

Any violence will stain Putrajaya, says Global Bersih
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 26 — Any violence at any Bersih 3.0 sit-in in the country will ultimately smear Barisan Nasional (BN) and the police, electoral reform group Global Bersih said today.

The group said Malaysians asking for free and fair elections have not received any support from “either Putrajaya, or a police force whose job it is to ensure the safety of Malaysians, irrespective of race, creed, religion or political affiliation”.

File photo of police firing water cannons at participants of the last Bersih rally in Kuala Lumpur on July 9, 2011. — Picture by Choo Choy May

“Such a travesty of justice and fair play has been perpetrated on Malaysia even as citizens overseas prepare to gather in 72 cities and 29 countries with the full co-operation of the police forces in these cities,” the group said in a statement.

Global Bersih said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar must publicly declare that they support Malaysians working towards an electoral system that delivers fair and free elections.

“If they do not, the PM, his home minister and the highest police officer in the land are together telling the country that they do not support the movement’s cause.

“Their collective failure to act on behalf of Malaysians who want a properly administered electoral process, before, during and after the vote, is akin to telling the country that they simply cannot countenance the result of an election that is conducted fairly and freely and which would stand up to full and independent scrutiny,” it said.

Global Bersih said Kuala Lumpur Mayor Ahmad Fuad Ismail’s statement that Bersih 3.0 organisers will be responsible for any ensuing chaos on Saturday is “the action of a senior official who has totally shunned his responsibility to the city and its residents”.

“Global Bersih believes that giving full approval for Duduk Bantah Bersih 3.0 is the most important responsibility facing the government today, especially in the face of violent attacks on Malaysian students at Dataran Merdeka and other disturbing incidents of violence and thuggery against peaceful, law-abiding citizens, many of which have not been properly investigated by police.

“The Malaysian government and police must guarantee the safety of citizens attending Duduk Bantah events this Saturday, and they must act now to prevent other groups from attacking, intimidating or otherwise harassing the organisers and their fellow Malaysians,” it said.

It also said the government risks being seen across the world as one that has publicly

declared its opposition to fair and free elections if it does not throw its weight behind the people's right to a sit-in.

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