

Government must charge Bersih organisers to show it is not weak, say Malay NGOs
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 3 — The Attorney-General must prosecute Bersih 3.0 organisers for the violence that occurred during Saturday's rally for free and fair elections, the Malay Consultative Council (MPM) said today, adding that failure to do so would make the government look "weak".

The coalition, comprising 228 Malay NGOs, said the government must take stern action towards the organisers to avoid "further escalation of violence" and to put an end to future rallies.

"The government's inaction so far shows they have no control over the people. It is too weak and tolerant," said Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Hilmi Ismail, chairman of MPM's politics and governance bureau.

"Because the A-G and the police have not done anything, this will spur Bersih to demonstrate again. If nothing is done, it will lead to chaos," he said.

MPM secretary-general Dr Hasan Mad said the Bersih rally did not reflect the sentiments of the majority as "only 30,000 people showed up."

"Being the silent majority, MPM with more than 2.5 million members unequivocally condemns the violence created by Bersih 3.0 protesters."

He added that the motive behind Bersih was to create a platform for "other parties to cause chaos as well as spread violence in the country".

The Bersih rally for free and fair elections turned chaotic when Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) personnel began firing tear gas and water cannons after demonstrators breached police lines in their attempt to reach Dataran Merdeka.

The event was initially planned for the historic square but authorities had secured a court order on Friday barring its use for public assemblies until May 1, forcing Bersih supporters to splinter into groups.

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