

**Children, paid supporters, made up Bersih 3.0's crowd, says Kayveas**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, June 18 — Schoolchildren, “blind” anti-Barisan Nasional (BN) supporters and paid participants had marched for Bersih 3.0, Datuk M. Kayveas has said, adding that 99 per cent of the thousands who gathered did not know what they were rallying for on April 28.

Kayveas, who leads the People’s Progressive Party (PPP), raged that many of the participants were those who have “shut their eyes to BN’s goodness” and were intent on blaming the ruling pact for their own failures in life.

He pointed out that he had come from a very poor family and had lived among squatters for some 25 years but still supports BN for what it has done for the country.

“It was because of what BN has done for the past 50 years that I can be what I am today. But there are those who grew up with me, who are still there... they never moved out of it.

“These people who are now supporting the opposition you see, they are forever making complaints or giving excuses for whatever failure of theirs to change themselves. They want to blame others, or find someone to blame,” he told The Malaysian Insider during a recent interview at his office here.

“But I always say — to be born poor is not a sin but to remain poor is.”

These “blind” supporters, added Kayveas, were the ones willing to spread discord on the streets and break the law as they knew their political leaders would later argue in their defence in Parliament.

The former deputy minister and Taiping MP said these supporters were even willing to “beat up policemen” and “damage police cars”, referring to the violent incidents that occurred during the thick of Bersih 3.0 when police rained down tear gas canisters and chemical-laced water to disperse protesters from the city.

But Kayveas accused the opposition for promoting such blind condemnation of BN and for allegedly instigating their supporters to break the law and to spread falsehoods through the use of social media tools.

“They have created groups to blindly support them with herd mentality, without realising what is the truth and what is not,” he said.

“The opposition teaches you that. Wake up in the morning and run people down on the Internet. If you cannot succeed in running people down, then you run to the streets.

“Ninety-nine per cent of those who marched with Bersih did not know why they were there. Give a yellow T-shirt, a few hundred ringgit and they are there.

“Some schoolchildren were there... when I asked them, they said their parents asked them to go,” he said.

Kayveas also lashed out at the electoral reform movement Bersih 2.0 for deviating from its original and "noble" cause to fight for clean and fair elections, which he said he supports.

"The issue is fair and clean elections. The issue was not about Dataran Merdeka. But you insisted on Dataran Merdeka so it clearly shows that you had diverted from the original, noble, idea into a now opposition-backed, daft, arrogant, stubborn, thinking of defying everything that is right by saying it is wrong," he said.

Tens of thousands had thronged the city's streets on April 28 for the Bersih 3.0 rally for free and fair elections, the election watchdog's third such event since 2007.

The opposition-backed protest had kicked off peacefully but turned chaotic shortly after 3pm when protesters breached the three-tiered barricades surrounding Dataran Merdeka, which had been blocked off to them via a court order obtained by the police.

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