

Anwar, Azmin, Chegubard hit with new charge over Bersih rally
Malaysian Insider
July 02, 2012
By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

KUALA LUMPUR, July 2 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Azmin Ali and Badrul Hisham Shaharin were today slapped with an additional charge in addition to two existing ones over the April 28 Bersih rally.

The three have now been charged under Section 109 of the Penal Code with abetting three other PKR members — Tangam Raju, Rajesh Kumar Gejinder and Farhan Ibrahim — as well as Bersih supporters to oppose a court order barring the use of Dataran Merdeka for the April 28 sit-in rally for electoral reform.

They may be jailed for up to two years if convicted.

All three pleaded not guilty to the new charge.

“We will amend our applications to strike out to include this new charge,” defence lawyer Ramkarpal Singh told Sessions court judge Mahmud Abdullah, before requesting more time to prepare affidavits-in-reply to the prosecution’s latest charge.

“We received a total of 30 affidavits on Thursday. We have to take instructions and study them,” he added.

Judge Mahmud set September 3 to hear the application to have all the charges dismissed.

Anwar and his deputy, Azmin, have claimed trial to participating in an illegal rally. Rembau PKR Youth chief Badrul Hisham @ Chegubard, who also faces similar charges, also claimed trial.

They were earlier charged under Section 4(2)(c) of the Peaceful Assembly Act, which relates to the right to organise a participate in an assembly. The section states that “a person commits an offence if he organises or participates in a street protest.”

Anwar, Azmin and Badrul were also previously charged under the Penal Code with abetting to incite three individuals, named as R. Tangam, G. Rajesh Kumar and Farhan Ibrahim @ Alias, to open the police barricade enclosing Dataran Merdeka during the April 28 Bersih 3.0 rally for electoral reforms.

In a video posted online, Anwar is seen gesturing towards Azmin moments before the crowd breached a police cordon around the square.

Anwar and Azmin have denied the exchange of signals was an order to break past the police barrier, with the former insisting these were to direct the Selangor PKR chief to negotiate with police.

The Permatang Pauh MP said the rolling motion he made with his hands directed at Azmin meant to “nego, nego” (negotiate).

Azmin said he then jerked his thumb over his shoulder and nodded to the former deputy prime minister to say “I had already negotiated with police.”

A few members of the crowd sandwiched between the square and Kuala Lumpur City Hall begin chanting "masuk, masuk (enter, enter)" and a man is seen pushing the metal gate aside, allowing the crowd to burst through.

Police had obtained a court order barring members of the public from entering the historic square. Bersih leaders had also told supporters not to defy the order and instead hold their sit-in rally for free and fair elections at the point they were stopped by police.

But some demonstrators still breached the barrier, prompting police to fire tear gas and water cannons at them. This led to spiralling chaos as police chased Bersih supporters down several streets and some rally-goers retaliated and attacked riot police.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had said when tabling the Peaceful Assembly Act in Parliament last year that it would be "revolutionary" and allow Malaysians to participate in public gatherings "in accordance with international norms."

Copyright © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/anwar-azmin-chegubard-hit-with-new-charge-over-bersih-rally/>