

Pakatan dismisses Dr M's street chaos claim
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By Md Izwan and Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders today dismissed former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's warning that the opposition pact will resort to street demonstrations if it loses in the upcoming 13th general elections.

PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar said that the federal opposition is committed to the democratic practice of elections.

"Our position is clear. We want free and fair elections, we have consistently participated in the electoral process and we believe in following through with processes allocated under the Federal Constitution, nothing more," she told The Malaysian Insider today.

Nurul Izzah said that political violence against PR leaders has seen a rise under Datuk Seri Najib Razak's rule as prime minister, alluding to pro-Umno groups such as Perkasa.

"We are asking and demanding for an end to political violence. You have not responded, instead you have hurled allegations against us," she said.

The Lembah Pantai MP also mentioned an attack this year against her in her own constituency.

But PR leaders have not retaliated even though they have been provoked and physically attacked, she said.

"You should judge us based on our actions and we are committed to peace and stability in Malaysia but certainly not committed to allowing a corrupt government to continue rampantly abusing its powers and robbing the nation's coffers," she said.

DAP's Liew Chin Tong pointed out that the federal opposition had never started any chaos due to polls results, which he claims are unfair.

"For the past 12 general elections since 1959, despite the elections being unfair, there was no opposition initiated chaos.

"What BN has to do is to guarantee free, fair and clean elections, and if it fails to win power, to guarantee a smooth transition," the Bukit Bendera MP said.

PAS' Dr Mohd Hatta Ramli went a step further, claiming that this could be a pre-emptive move by Dr Mahathir in the event that the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition is defeated at the polls.

"Mahathir's statement clearly means violence that appears from their supporters.

"It looks like Mahathir is trying to mentally prepare the people to memberontak (rebel) if Pakatan Rakyat wins later," the Kuala Krai MP said.

Two days ago, Dr Mahathir had warned that democracy does not guarantee the public safety and security as violence could ensue when groups rise to demand their rights.

The country's longest-serving prime minister spoke extensively on how parties would refuse to accept defeat when they lose during elections, and would abuse democratic processes to negate the results of such a poll.

He predicted that if PR loses the upcoming polls, there would likely be more street violence in Malaysia through public demonstrations, even heaping the blame entirely on its opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Dr Mahathir said that street demonstrations were Anwar's way of preparing for the elections, adding that "without Anwar, there are no demonstrations".

He also said the opposition has already begun setting the stage for unrest, pointing to how Malaysians have been rallied by pro-PR groups to rise and reject the results of the election should Barisan Nasional (BN) retain Putrajaya.

"They are creating an environment where people are being told that the next election will be unfair so people must be prepared to reject the result of the election and hold

demonstrations and disrupt the economy and all that so they can gain power even after losing," he said.

Umno leaders yesterday told The Malaysian Insider that they agreed with Dr Mahathir's warning of chaos and street protests if PR loses the upcoming elections.

Protests and rallies in Malaysia have been largely peaceful until the police intervene, with notable examples in recent years being the electoral reform rallies by Bersih.

Human rights activists including the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) have said peaceful assemblies and rallies should be allowed especially with new laws enacted to facilitate such events with appropriate notice given to the authorities.

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