

Anwar's rally legal, no need for 10-day notice, says Ambiga
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By Boo Su-Lyn

KUALA LUMPUR, May 8 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's rally at the Kelana Jaya stadium tonight is legal as a 10-day notification to the police is not required under the Peaceful Assembly Act (PAA) 2012, senior lawyer Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan said today.

Ambiga pointed out that reasonable notice was sufficient if the 10-day notice could not be given, based on the doctrine of necessity that the authorities have followed in previous Umno protests.

"I am still of the view that it is not illegal as the doctrine of necessity dictates that where the 10-day notice cannot be given, then reasonable notice applies," Ambiga told The Malaysian Insider today.

"The police have waived the 10-day notification in circumstances when it's not possible to give notice," she added, referring to the Umno Youth rally at the US embassy against the "Innocence of Muslims" film last year as an example.

The Star Online reported today that the organisers had obtained approval from the stadium management and notified the police earlier today.

The news portal also quoted Selangor police chief Datuk Tun Hisan Tun Hamzah as saying that the PR rally is illegal because the pact did not inform the police 10 days in advance.

Tun Hisan added that the police would gather evidence to see if action could be taken against the organisers or participants.

Ambiga, however, noted that the police has waived the 10-day notice requirement in previous Umno protests, such as an Umno Youth rally at the US embassy against the "Innocence of Muslims" film last year.

"The police have waived the 10-day notification in circumstances when it's not possible to give notice," she said.

Anwar said yesterday that tonight's rally would mark the beginning of a "fierce movement" to fight for free and fair elections amid reports of vote-rigging in Election 2013.

The PKR de facto leader, who had led thousands in the "Reformasi" street demonstrations in 1998, also called on Malaysians to wear black or use black insignia to protest alleged electoral fraud in the 13th general election.

Anwar has noted that the results in some 30 federal constituencies were in doubt, thus affecting the legitimacy of the Barisan Nasional (BN) government that was formed with just 133 seats, 21 seats more than the 112 seats required to win a simple majority.

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