

**Rafizi: Pakatan adamant on Padang Merbok for June 22 rally**  
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**By Boo Su-Lyn**

KUALA LUMPUR, June 12 — Pakatan Rakyat's (PR) "Black 505" rally will proceed at Padang Merbok here on June 22, despite the Olympic Council of Malaysia's (OCM) insistence that it needed the field then for an event the day after, PKR's Rafizi Ramli said today.

The PKR strategy director pointed out that the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) had informed PR that Padang Merbok was only booked from 6pm onwards on June 22, contrary to OCM's statement yesterday that logistics preparation for the June 23 McDonald's Olympic Run would start on June 21.

"DBKL told us at the beginning that we can only book up to 6pm because after that, another event will be held at Padang Merbok the next day," Rafizi told The Malaysian Insider today.

"We can sit down with the Olympic Council to discuss what kind of arrangement is necessary to allow both to proceed smoothly," he added.

OCM honorary secretary Datuk Sieh Kok Chi said yesterday that preparation for the Olympic Run in the city centre would start on June 21 after 3pm and June 22 after 6pm.

He noted that runners will pass by Padang Merbok, although the run will be flagged off from the iconic Dataran Merdeka here on June 23.

Sieh said that the Olympic Run — which has been held annually on June 23 since 1994 in celebration of Olympic Day — would involve 15,000 runners and that the venue was booked at the end of last year.

KL Mayor Datuk Ahmad Phesal Talib urged PR last Monday to select another venue for the rally against electoral fraud, preferably a closed-door area such as a stadium, saying the field would be needed for "logistic preparations" for OCM's June 23 event.

The mayor also said holding the rally at the open, public venue would pose traffic concerns for motorists travelling along Jalan Parlimen, Jalan Kuching, Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin, Jalan Raja Laut, Jalan Raja and Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman.

PR has held "Black 505" mass rallies across the country since May 5 to protest against alleged vote-rigging in Election 2013 that saw the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) retain power, despite losing the popular vote.

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