

Black 505: Rafizi defies police
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By Elizabeth Zachariah

With about 48 hours left before Saturday's Black 505 rally, the standoff between the police and the organisers continues.

In response to a police warning yesterday that the organisers will be prosecuted if the rally is held, PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli told The Malaysian Insider there was no change of plan.

"We will continue with it," he said of the plan to hold the gathering at Padang Merbok in Kuala Lumpur.

"However, we are hopeful that closer to the date, the police will be able to accommodate our request."

He added: "But I understand the police's hands are tied in this matter. It is Putrajaya pulling the strings here. They have to learn how to respect the majority, who are concerned about the fraud during the recent polls.

Yesterday, Dang Wangi police chief ACP Zainuddin Ahmad had issued yet another strong warning from the authorities.

Speaking at a press conference, the top cop in charge of the area where the rally is to be held warned that the organisers face prosecution although police had received notification of the rally 10 days beforehand, as stipulated under the Peaceful Assembly Act (PAA) 2012. This was because the organisers have not received approval from City Hall to use the field.

He said police will not be making any preparations to accommodate the rally but they will be present to "enforce the law".

But Rafizi responded that the rallies would continue until the Government paid heed to their demands. "The sooner they realise this, the better."

A series of Black 505 rallies, which started on May 8, have been organised by the Opposition to protest the results of the 2013 elections, which were marred with allegations of fraud and irregularities.

They have also called for the resignation of the top brass in the Election Commission.

Rafizi also confirmed that, contrary to previous reports, the field was not booked for another event on Saturday itself.

"It is only booked for a run, organised by the Olympic Council of Malaysia, the next day. He promised that the rally would be over before 6pm to allow the organisers of the run to set up before the event on Sunday. - June 20, 2013.

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