

Black 505: 1% pitch tent
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By Lionel Morais, Managing Editor

The big picture with the Black 505 rally is that it came and went largely without incident, even though a fraction of those protestors have decided to make camp in Padang Merbok and test the patience of the authorities.

More than 20,000 protestors took to the streets of Kuala Lumpur from seven gathering points about noon and marched to Padang Merbok, chanting anti-BN slogans. But almost all of them left at about 6pm.

All but 1%.

About 200 protestors representing Solidarity Anak Muda Malaysia (SAMM) have decided not to leave.

How Malaysians record the history of this day depends on how they choose to interpret the above facts.

The critics will point to the 200 students and youth who have pitched about 40 tents on the field and plan to stay until Parliament convenes on Monday. Some will say this is occupation, like the ones that sparked changes abroad. Others will point to the big picture and 99% went home.

The focus at this moment is on the 1%. They have said they will camp it out until the 13th Parliament of Malaysia sits for the first time. The students are calling for the resignation of the Election Commission members.

They have called for re-enforcement, asking the public to bring them supplies as they begin their camp-out. More students and youth are expected to pitch tents there later tonight.

Earlier, the student activists were involved in a minor scuffle with City Hall enforcement officers who went in to pull down the tents.

The authorities had to back off after other protestors came to the aid of the students and youth.

There is a signboard on the field warning against the erection of any structure there. Those who violate this rule can be fined up to RM2,000 or jailed up to a year. - June 22, 2013.

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