

In Singapore, 55 Malaysian protesters warned over illegal gathering
Malaysian Insider
July 10 , 2013

The Singapore police have taken action against 55 people involved in the illegal protest at Merlion Park on May 8 following the Malaysian general election earlier that month.

The island republic's Ministry of Home Affairs said that 49 were administered conditional warnings to stay crime-free and six issued with verbal advisories.

Providing an update in Singapore's parliament yesterday, Second Minister for Home Affairs S Iswaran said the authorities are reviewing the action to be taken against four others. All those involved in the illegal gathering were foreigners.

"I want to emphasise (that) while foreigners are welcome to work or live in Singapore, they have to abide by our laws," said Mr Iswaran. He noted that foreigners should not "import domestic issues" and conduct activities which can disturb public order, as there could be groups with opposing views here.

Member of Parliament Zaqy Mohamad (Chua Chu Kang GRC), who noted that the protest went on for at least two hours, asked why the police had allowed the event to continue.

To this, Mr Iswaran said police officers were on the ground within 15 minutes of receiving reports of the event.

"They made a tactical assessment on the ground that they wanted to observe, identify who were the main participants or players and take action against them subsequently ... rather than make an intervention," he added.

Mr Iswaran also said the ministry has "always taken a strong stand against the importation of foreign politics into Singapore, or attempts by foreign entities to interfere" in politics and governance here.

A visit by then-Johor Mentri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Ghani Othman to Singapore in the lead-up to the elections had raised questions on whether he was campaigning here.

The minister added: "We will not allow foreigners, be they politicians, social visitors or workers who are here, to use Singapore as a platform to conduct any political activities which contravene our laws." - Todayonline.com, July 10, 2013.

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