

Is rally to restore Malay dignity, Najib's flagging support, asks Azmin
The Malaysian Insider
Sept 17, 2015

Selangor Menteri Besar Mohamed Azmin Ali has asked if the "red shirt" rally was Umno's idea of restoring Malay dignity and shoring up support for its embattled president, following yesterday's racially-charged gathering while the nation was celebrating Malaysia Day.

Expressing disgust and shame at Malay men and women clad in red shirts chanting racist slogans against other communities, Azmin said what was supposed to be a celebration of joy and happiness as a united nation was marred with thousands coming to Kuala Lumpur to trumpet Malay supremacy, sow fear of impending violence and incite hatred against other races, particularly the Chinese.

"Is this Umno's best idea of restoring Malay dignity? Busing in thousands of Felda settlers and party members from the states and setting them loose like an angry mob out to lynch others?"

"Is this Umno's best idea of shoring up support for the prime minister? Whipping up anti-Chinese, anti-DAP sentiment and engaging in acts of provocation like marching to Low Yat and Petaling Street?"

"Is this Umno's definition of 'Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu', where only Malays belonging to one political party and members from right-wing groups congregate with no positive agenda or purpose except to vilify the Chinese community and their leaders and to shout at the top of their voices how great Malays are supposed to be?"

"And is this how Umno wants to show case the religion of Islam? Indeed, by saying that racism is in line with Islamic teachings and that such a rally, even though racist, is endorsed by the religion, they have added insult to injury and have committed great dishonour to Islam and Malay dignity," he said in a statement today.

Yesterday's "red shirt" rally, also called Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu, by a coalition of Malay non-governmental organisations was held to counter last month's Bersih 4 rally, which rally organisers claimed had insulted the integrity of the Malay race.

Pekida president Jamaluddin Yusof had described the rally as "jihad" and estimated some 10,000 members were present.

Filled with incendiary remarks and racially-charged banners and placards, the rally saw some tense moments when participants were upset over questions asked by some journalists and riot police sprayed chemical-laced water on a group of rowdy rally-goers who attempted to breach the police barricades to gain access to Petaling Street.

Although Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak had said the party did not endorse the rally, he also said its members would not be prohibited from attending.

Azmin said the leaders responsible for yesterday's rally are now "forever tainted" with violating the unwritten code of conduct of a nation, which is to treat all communities with honour, dignity and respect.

"They should be seized with remorse and overcome by shame... if there is any self-respect left in them," he said.

The PKR deputy president said Malaysia Day is a day to remind everyone that Malaysia is a multi-racial and multi-religious country, united under the King as head of state and that everyone should be treated with courtesy and moral rectitude.

"Rather than marching with hatred and animosity, we should have been marching hand-in-hand as a nation regardless of race, colour or creed singing our Negara Ku, renewing our social compact and strengthening our bonds of citizenship under the flag of Malaysia," he added. – September 17, 2015

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