

Pasir Gudang MCA Youth's move to cut ties with Najib an individual decision, says party leader

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By Eileen Ng

MCA's Pasir Gudang Youth Wing has jumped the gun and acted immaturely in its move to sever ties with the prime minister, said a party leader following Datuk Seri Najib Razak's support for the September 16 "red shirt" rally which has been criticised as being racist in nature.

Central committee member Datuk Seri Ti Lian Ker said the move was "individual posturing" and that the youth members should exercise restraint and hear the party leadership out this Thursday before taking such drastic actions.

The senior ethnic Chinese party in the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition is holding a briefing on September 24 at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur for grassroots members.

Such briefings, which are held periodically, usually allow leaders to update members on current issues and party programmes. It is also a time for the party grassroots to ask questions on any issue.

"For the time being, they should wait for the party briefing, they shouldn't pre-empt any party decision. They should not jump the gun or arm twist party leaders without hearing them out.

"It's politically immature and irresponsible to do so. They have access to party leaders at all levels, so there is no need for such posturing for a few minutes of glory in the media," Ti told The Malaysian Insider.

Disappointed with Najib's support for the red shirts' Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu rally on Malaysia Day, the Pasir Gudang MCA youth wing, in a statement posted on its Facebook page, announced yesterday that it would cut ties with Najib and boycott the prime minister's and Umno president's functions.

However, it will continue working with Johor Umno and its Menteri Besar, it said

The Malaysian Insider understands that the Pasir Gudang MCA division is convening a meeting today to discuss the conduct of its youth chapter.

However, Ti said MCA, as a democratic party, would not resort to imposing a gag order against the members as it respects individual expression.

"We have a million members and we can't stop individual grassroots from having a personal stand and opinion," he said.

He said the party needed to educate its members on political maturity, and that the decision-making process as well as other democratic practices should be done collectively.

MCA, which has seen a massive loss of voter support over the last two general elections, has been accused of being politically irrelevant.

But Ti sought to defend his party, saying that MCA instead played the role of moderator to "douse off" political fires without taking any credit.

"MCA will not react or retaliate impulsively or abrasively as we have always been moderate in our approach, although not appealing and at times not populist," he said.

The Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu rally last Wednesday was held to counter last month's Bersih 4 demonstration, which the "red-shirt" rally organisers claimed had insulted the Malay race.

It saw incendiary remarks and racially-charged banners and placards as well as some tense moments when participants got upset over questions asked by some journalists.

Riot police also sprayed chemical-laced water on a group of rowdy rally-goers who had attempted to breach the police barricades to gain access to Petaling Street, a shopping and tourist area that is also popularly referred to as the Chinatown of KL.

Najib, who is also Umno president, had justified the rally, saying that it was a manifestation of the rise of Malays to defend their dignity and the country's leadership from being condemned and humiliated. – September 21, 2015.

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