

Umno meeting focused on 'red shirt' rally, Bersih 4, says source
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By Md Izwan

Umno's political bureau meeting yesterday steered clear of hot-button issues, a source said, despite being the first meeting after deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and vice-president Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal were sacked from the Cabinet.

The meeting, chaired by Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak, focused on the Bersih 4 rally and the looming September 16 "red shirt" rally by Malay rights groups.

He said the meeting went well even though he expected the situation to heat up due to the presence of Shafie and Muhyiddin, both of whom have been critical of the prime minister of late.

"The meeting went on smoothly. However, Muhyiddin and Shafie did not actively participate in the discussions," the source told The Malaysian Insider on condition of anonymity.

"The situation was calm; those present raised current national issues."

Najib did not touch upon rumours that Muhyiddin and Shafie will be sacked from the party, said the source.

"What concerned members was the red shirt rally. Some members of the political bureau did not agree with it."

He said their contention was over the rally location and the fact that it had not received the police's permission.

"They questioned why the rally must be held near Low Yat," the source added.

Low Yat Plaza, located in Kuala Lumpur's shopping district of Bukit Bintang, was the scene of fistfights on the night of July 12.

The brawl took on a racial tinge after around 200 people from Malay groups gathered in front of the mall to protest a storekeeper's arrest of a Malay youth who allegedly stole a smartphone.

Supporters of the "red shirt rally" plan to gather in Bukit Bintang for 12 hours, from noon of September 16, which is Malaysia Day.

The rally, dubbed "Himpunan Rakyat Bersatu", is to counter the recent Bersih 4 protest, which they claim disrupted business in Malay-dominated areas in the country's capital.

However, critics believe the rally would turn provocative given its location and

racially-charged slogans.

Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Noor Rashid Ibrahim said police would not allow the rally due to safety reasons. – September 8, 2015.

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