

Mahathir mocks 'smart aleck' police for blocking debate
Free Malaysia Today
April 4, 2017

Former premier unleashes sarcastic tirade against the 'wicked police' for disrupting freedom of speech.

PETALING JAYA: Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has characterised the police as being “wicked” for preventing a debate between himself and Tourism and Culture Minister Nazri Aziz from taking place this Friday.

The chairman of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) said while Prime Minister Najib Razak and his cabinet members were not obstructing the event, it was the police who tried to be smart alecks (“pandai-pandai”) by barring it.

“It was said that schools cannot be used, it was said unrest might happen, that there were protests from the people and so on,” Mahathir said in detailing the reasons given for the persistent banning of the debate.

“All these are at the whims of the police,” he said in a posting on his blog today.

Mahathir pointed out that Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Khalid Abu Bakar had said on March 10 that the police would not interfere and the debate had nothing to do with them.

Yet the person who eventually disapproved each time was the officer in charge of the police district (OCPD), he noted.

On April 2, Kumpulan Media Karangraf, the publisher of Malay daily Sinar Harian, which was organising the event at its headquarters in Shah Alam, received a letter from Shah Alam district police chief ACP Shafien Mamat that the permit for the event had been cancelled, citing complaints from neighbours in the vicinity as a reason.

Mahathir noted that the police had already given approval for the event to go ahead.

The debate was initially supposed to be held at the Mara Junior Science College in Kuala Kangsar on March 25 but this too was cancelled after the Perak police refused to issue a permit on grounds that the venue was the premises of a school.

Mahathir had then mocked that the low-ranking police had taken over the running of the country.

“The government, the ministers and Najib are so democratic, wanting full freedom for the people. But it is the police who are disturbing. How wicked of the police,” he said, using his trademark sarcasm.

“Now the IGP himself is forced to comply with the whims of the lower-ranking officer below him. The IGP himself also did not agree for the debate to be held in Shah Alam.

“Don’t blame Nazri because the minister offered Antarctica (as a venue) and penguins as my supporters; I cannot afford to go there. I cannot be away from this democratic country for too long,” he quipped.

He also agreed with Nazri that Malaysia had become a police state.

“Yes, it’s true. The threads that move the lips and tongue of the police do not exist even though they seem to be there,” he said, apparently inferring that the police were puppets.

Copyright (C) 2009-2016 MToday News Sdn. Bhd. All Rights Reserved.

Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/04/04/mahathir-mocks-smart-aleck-police-for-blocking-debate/>