



PRESS STATEMENT: BERSIH 2.0'S RESPONSE TO DBKL AND PDRM

YESTERDAY, endorsing NGOs of the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections 2.0 (BERSIH 2.0) had an emergency meeting and unanimously decided to proceed with the BERSIH 3.0 "Duduk Bantah" in Dataran Merdeka.

The emergency meeting was called to consider the statement made by the Home Minister on Sunday 22 April 2012 that we may be offered Stadium Merdeka or Stadium Bukit Jalil as possible alternate venues for "Duduk Bantah".

On the other hand, the Datuk Bandar, in complete contradiction, has offered Stadium Cheras and Titiwangsa.

BERSIH 2.0 regrets that the Government is repeating its strategy of offering different and confusing responses to the planned “Duduk Bantah”. These mixed signals are reminiscent of what occurred last year. It is disappointing that the Government has failed to speak with one clear voice. The Government appears to have given the go-ahead, while Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) and the police are creating obstacles.

On 4 April 2012 BERSIH 2.0 announced “Duduk Bantah” on 28 April 2012 at Dataran Merdeka. On 16 April 2012 we faxed a letter both to DBKL and the police to inform them accordingly. DBKL said they did not receive the fax. So a copy of the letter was delivered by hand to both DBKL and the police. It is thus not correct for the Datuk Bandar to have said on 18 April 2012 that DBKL had not heard from us.

'Dataran Merdeka it is'

Written by straits-mongrel

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 20:06 - Last Updated Tuesday, 24 April 2012 20:18

On 19 April 2012 and again on 22 April 2012 the Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin said that our planned sit-in is not a security threat and has little traction with the public.

Yesterday, on 23 April 2012, the police replied also rejecting our intention to use of Dataran Merdeka.

The decision to stick with Dataran Merdeka was arrived at for various reasons.

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Firstly, Dataran Merdeka is accessible by various means of public transportation with high capacity, such as LRT (Masjid Jamek, Pasar Seni), Komuter (KTM station), Monorail (Maharajalela) and public buses (Puduraya, Bangkok Bank and Pasar Seni). No other venue located outside of central Kuala Lumpur can offer similar convenience.

Secondly, Dataran Merdeka signifies nationhood and freedom. It is therefore the most appropriate place to express our patriotic demand for electoral reform.

Thirdly, it is our constitutional right to gather at a public space like Dataran Merdeka. This right should not be compromised on spurious grounds as “Duduk Bantah” is a people-based and peaceful national and global movement, and does not pose a security threat.

We believe the police can ensure the safety of “Duduk Bantah”. As proven in the 26 February 2012 Himpunan Hijau 2.0 and 18 March 2012 Wanita Suara Perubahan events, public rallies can take place peacefully and smoothly if both the police and local authorities work together with the organisers.

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