



BERSIH 2.0 is gravely concern with the gangster-like violent actions taken by a group of youngsters (aged between 14-20 Years old) who rudely broke up a ceramah at Shah Alam.

A ceramah co-organised by the Anything But UMNO (ABU) movement and Hindraf at Jalan Kebun in Shah Alam last night was rudely broken up when the chairperson began the programme. Speakers invited included Mohamad Sabu, Vice President of PAS, Haris Ibrahim, lawyer and activist, PKR leader Badrul Hisham Shahrin and Hindraf national coordinator W Sambulingam.

A group of about 30 youth entered the hall of the ceramah, including a youth on a motorcycle, hurling water bottles and the organisers' materials, and shouting abusive language at the participants and organizers. They demanded that the meeting be stopped immediately. One of the participants, Khrisnan, aged 33 years old, was beaten up by 15 youths and has been hospitalized at Sentosa Medical Centre.

No arrests were made by the police even though the offenders were still hovering outside the hall and shouting abusively, when the police arrived.

This is a stark reminder of the dirty and violent tactics used at an Asia Pacific Coalition for East Timor II (Apcet II) conference held at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur in November 1996 when a group of thugs stormed the meeting venue and damaged property belonging to the hotel. Such gangsterism must be stopped. It is the duty and responsibility of the police to protect citizens exercising their constitutional right to assemble and speak.

As reported in Free Malaysia Today, 21 January 2012, Selangor police chief Tun Hisan Tun Hamzah and Shah Alam OCPD Zahedi Ayob have both brushed off claims of injury and made light of the serious situation. Their comments and failure to take any action are an embarrassment to the Royal Malaysian Police when there is clear video evidence showing the storming of the event and the injury to one of the participants. The police denial of the seriousness of the attack and the violence committed against the organizers and participants is tantamount to condoning the violence that occurred. Their failure to respond in a prompt and pro-active manner is an invitation for others to commit similar acts of violence with impunity.

BERSIH 2.0 demands that the IGP conducts an investigation immediately on last night's acts of violence and arrest the offenders who have committed such crimes. We also call upon the government to put a stop to such acts of violence, which runs contrary to Article 10 of the Federal Constitution that allows for freedom of speech, assembly and association.

Lastly, BERSIH 2.0 wishes all Malaysians a Happy, Clean and Free Chinese New Year in the Year of Dragon which begins tomorrow.

Salam BERSIH 2.0

Steering Committee, Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0)

The Steering Committee of BERSIH 2.0 comprises:

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