

Analysts praise authorities' tough stand

KUALA LUMPUR: The tough stand taken by the authorities on those behind the proposed rally on Dec 31 to overthrow the government has been welcomed by social and political analysts.

The analysts fear that the gathering poses a threat to the country's political stability and security, and denies the rights of the peace-loving majority.

"There are only four days left and most Malaysians want to see stern action taken by the authorities," said social analyst Dr Ibrahim Ghafar.

He feared that without any action to stop the organisers, things could get out of hand as those opposing the gathering were ready to turn up to show their displeasure.

"This is what transpired in Egypt that resulted in the deaths of many innocent people."

On Tuesday, police detained student activist Muhamad Azan Safar, 24, in Kampung Baru here for allegedly having links to the rally to overthrow the government.

Azan, the chairman of Gerakan Turun Kos Sara Hidup (Turun) is supposed to lead the rally at Dataran Merdeka on the New Year's Eve.

On Thursday, a 25-year-old unemployed man was arrested in Saratok, Sarawak for inciting the public through a Facebook account to join the rally.

A lecturer on politics and government with Universiti Putra Malaysia, Prof Dr Jayum Jawan, said if the gathering was to overthrow a legitimately elected government, it was certainly an illegal gathering that had to be stopped.

"The organisers have to be arrested and investigated for attempting to overthrow a legitimately elected government. Now the question here is who is the government that they are referring to? Is it the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or the ruling party?"

"These are two different things. If they refer to king, it is an act of betrayal against the nation.

"If they refer to the government elected legitimately through the democratic process, it is legally not right."

However, Jayum said that any peaceful demonstration had to be allowed as they reflected a matured democratic process that allowed people to voice their support or dissent on the government's moves.

Md Shukri Shuib, a political and international relations don with Universiti Utara Malaysia, said the Turun gathering was not only an attempt to destroy the government institution but also the country's achievement hitherto.

"Their actions does not only sabotage the political system and the government but also the economy and the social system." **Bernama**