

GEORGE TOWN: Some 50 people from two Malay non-governmental organisations (NGOs) staged a peaceful protest in support of the Internal Security Act (ISA) at the ground floor foyer of Komtar here.

The Persatuan Putra Pulau Pinang and Pertubuhan Al-Ehsan Malaysia members held banners in support of the ISA at 10am and dispersed some 30 minutes later following police advice.

Wan Balkis Wan Abdullah, the founder of Persatuan Putra Pulau Pinang, said the ISA was relevant as it could be used against those who are out to disrupt the country's peace and stability.

Those who do not create chaos should not be afraid of the Act. It is only used against those who raise racial sentiments and create disharmony in the country, he said here yesterday.

Meanwhile, police have issued a stern warning to two parties planning to organise a demonstration on the ISA on Saturday.

City police chief Deputy Comm Datuk Wira Muhammad Sabtu Osman said police have received information that an anti-ISA movement, the Gerakan Mansuhkan ISA (GMI), is planning to march to the palace before handing over a memorandum urging the King to dissolve the ISA.

Another pro-ISA group comprising the Majlis Pemuafakatan Ummah (Pewaris), Persatuan Pribumi Perkasa (Perkasa) as well as several NGOs are planning to have a gathering in several locations in Kuala Lumpur on the same day, he said.

DCP Muhammad Sabtu said police are worried the tense situation which may be created by both parties with different ideologies may disrupt peace and safety.

We will set up police roadblocks at roads leading to and inside the city for two days before the event. Any buses suspected of ferrying people to the illegal gathering would be stopped and detained under Section 105 of the Criminal Procedure Code as a preventive measure.

He said that police have yet to receive an application for a permit for the event, adding that a letter from organisers to inform police about the event was not sufficient.

The proper procedure is to fill up a permit application form, he said, adding that the organisers have claimed they would begin gathering at around 2pm.

DCP Muhammad Sabtu said he has already met with the organisers of the pro-ISA movement and told them to abandon their plans. He will be meeting the organisers from GMI today to dissuade them.

DCP Muhammad Sabtu said police have deemed the gathering and demonstration plans by both parties as illegal. Those taking part in the event can be charged in court and face fines or jail terms, he said.