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Police use water cannons to disperse demonstrators at KLCC

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Police were forced to use water cannons to disperse a group of demonstrators along Jalan Ampang, near the Kuala Lumpur City Centre building, after they ignored orders to disperse.

About 150 people started chanting anti-Government slogans and displaying banners and posters about 1.30pm and an hour later Dang Wangi police chief Senior Assistant Commissioner II Zainal Abidin Ali ordered the group to disperse but was jeered at instead.

Following this, scores of policemen, including the Federal Reserve Unit who were stationed at the vicinity of the building since morning, moved in.

When the demonstrators refused to budge, water laced with a yellow substance, was sprayed in their direction.

Although the police have been using the water cannons on several occasions, this was the first time they had mixed a yellow-colour substance in the water to spray at the demonstrators.

It is learnt that the yellow colour cannot be washed off, hence it will be easier for the police to identify those involved in the illegal gathering.

Police detained several protesters. However, until Press time, it could not be ascertained how many were picked up.

It was learnt that police had moved in because they received information that the demonstrators were planning to march to the nearby Renaissance Hotel as they had tried to do last night.

City police chief Datuk Kamaruddin Alias declined to comment on the incident when contacted.

Earlier, a gathering organised by the Asia Pacific People's Assembly was held at the KLCC Park about 11am.

During the peaceful 90-minute gathering, representatives from various countries in the Asia Pacific region, including those from Malaysia, Indonesia and the Phillipines, took turns to address the crowd of about 250.

Fliers distributed to the crowd said the gathering was a show of protest of globalisation and its adverse effect on people's lives and to denounce the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

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