

04 FEB 1999
Court-Assembly
GROUP SHOUTED "REFORMASI" - WITNESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 4 (Bernama) -- A witness at the trial of 126 people charged with taking part in an illegal assembly in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman in October last year told the Magistrate's Court here that a group of them held up banners and shouted "Reformasi, bebas Anwar, undur Mahathir."

Former Dang Wangi OCPD, SAC II Zainal Abidin Ali, 55, told the court that initially he did not give them any orders as they were not doing anything violent.

However later he directed a policeman to detain a woman who was dancing on the road and shouting "reformasi" in front of the Sogo shopping complex.

He said the initial calm was shattered when the 4,000 odd people there cheered and applauded the woman dancer,

"The situation caused a traffic jam in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman where previously the traffic flow was smooth as many people were now on the road," he said.

Zainal Abidin said the group of people continued to shout when the woman, Azirah Meran, 21, a bank clerk who is now among the people charged with illegal assembly was detained.

All of them are charged under Section 27 (8) of the Police Act which provides for a maximum jail term of one year or a fine of not less than RM2,000 and not more than RM10,000 or both.

Zainal Abidin said the woman dancer who was clad in what appeared to be clothing made from paper with writings on it which he could not recall emerged from a group of people in front of the Sogo building.

He said that at about 6pm the group marched to the Merdeka Square and he was told they were heading for the National Mosque for Maghrib prayers.

Hearing before Magistrate Kamarulzaman Abdul Rahman continues tomorrow.

-- BERNAMA

JA AHH AAM