

# Full Suhakam panel may meet

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## All comments should be considered, says Harun

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**KUALA LUMPUR**, Thurs: The Malaysian Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) may hold a full panel meeting to discuss public comments on its report on the police handling of the Jalan Kehun demonstration.

Its vice-chairman, Tan Sri Harun Hashim, said today he may propose a full commission meeting to discuss all the comments.

He believes Suhakam should consider all the views, saying it is useless to issue comments and counter comments.

"Personally, I feel that whatever comments by the government ministers, the opposition, backbenchers and NGOs should be considered by Suhakam," he said.

Yesterday, commenting on Suhakam's inquiry into the Jalan Kebun illegal gathering on

Nov 5. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad accused the commission of being influenced by western thinking.

He said the three-member inquiry panel produced a biased report, giving insufficient consideration to the fact that police worked under a lot of pressure.

The 66-page report exposed, among other things, police heavy-handedness in dispersing the crowd and the inhuman treatment of those arrested.

Commissioner Datuk Lee Lam Thye said Suhakam welcomes public criticisms "but whether they are justified, we will have to discuss first".

On Umno supreme council member Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad's suggestion that Suhakam be disbanded if its recommendations are unacceptable to "certain parties", Lee said it is up to the government and parliament to decide.

He said Suhakam is merely discharging its duties "accord-

ing to the wishes of parliament".

Commissioner Prof Datuk Hamdan Adnan defended the report, saying it is comprehensive and the recommendations are "very Islamic as they do not condone violence".

He said they are not merely directed at the police but also magistrates and other parties involved.

"We are not saying that police should not act. (but) it is how they act. I urge those who wish to comment on the report to read it first," Hamdan said.

National Human Rights Association secretary-general Elizabeth Wong said Suhakam already has limited powers in getting its recommendations implemented and curbing it further will defeat the purpose of its creation.

"At the end of the day non-governmental organisations and the public want a police force which is responsible and respected by all," she said.