

Thanks Najib, for turning KL into world media circus
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One result of the lock-down of central Kuala Lumpur on July 9 was that it severely limited the number of inadvertent eye-witnesses to Bersih 2.0. Otherwise, tens of thousands of ordinary workers, shoppers and other members of the public moving about the city centre could have testified to what actually happened.

Instead, there are a few 'umpires' who could now testify to the truth or lie of the various claims made by the rally organisers, participants, the media, the police and the ruling coalition.

For example, the truth that the numbers that turned up across the city centre were closer to the 50,000 claimed by the organisers (and probably exceeded it) than the 6,000 put up by the police, could be verified.

And the lie in the New Straits Times headline questioning the peacefulness of the rally. Or the truth that tear gas and chemical water were shot at peaceful, law-abiding people, who even then did not react violently.

Still, the rally leaders have good reason to be cheerful because what could have been almost a non-event to the international media was turned into a city-wide circus of great media interest by the police.

And the prime minister is right: this is not the way to handle political differences.

To those who believe there is need for electoral reform and believe in the right of citizens to assemble and who yet failed to turn up without good reason, I can only say shame on you.

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