

**PKR: Tear gas blitzkrieg an overkill**  
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The 262 tear gas shells and grenades fired at the Bersih 2.0 rally participants were disproportionate to the actual force needed to handle a peaceful demonstration, PKR vice-president N Surendran says.

"There is incontrovertible video and photographic evidence that the rally was entirely peaceful," he said.

Surendran, a leading human rights activist, said the sheer number of shells expended shows that the police were firing indiscriminately, with the intention of frightening and punishing the participants.

This was uncalled for because the participants were merely expressing their right to assembly in accordance with Article 10 of the Federal Constitution, he said.

hindraf to palace 250408 n surendranCoupled with attempts by the federal government to criminalise and demonise Bersih 2.0, Surendran (left) said the police had been abused by the government to fulfil BN's agenda.

"The police were to ensure the failure of the rally and destroy the Bersih movement for fair and free elections.

"This was an utter and corrupt abuse of state powers to further the narrow political agenda of the ruling BN coalition," he said.

Police were not provoked

Surendran argued that the best example of "indiscriminate and unlawful" firing of tear gas shells was when the police fired into KL Sentral.

Numerous opposition and civil society figures, including PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim and PAS central committee member Khalid Samad, were injured in this incident.

Surendran said there was proof that the police fired the tear gas shells unprovoked.

"Dozens of shells were suddenly fired directly into the crowd in the tunnel, causing the gas to collect in thick clouds, almost suffocating the peaceful marchers.

"No action has been taken against Brickfields police chief ACP Wan Abdul Bari, who personally ordered the shooting, or against any other police personnel involved.

"Despite police reports and repeated requests for action to be taken against those guilty, there has been total inaction and deafening silence from the IGP and the home minister," he said.

PKR, Surendran said, wants the attorney-general to institute criminal proceedings against the culpable officers, irrespective of rank or position.