

Spirit of Bersih 3.0 flows abroad

MalaysiaKini.com

April 28, 2012

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The spirit of the Bersih 3.0 rally in Kuala Lumpur has crossed time zones, with thousands of people pouring onto streets in Australia and New Zealand to march together with up to 100,000 of their brethren in Malaysia.

Malaysians in 35 countries and 85 cities worldwide, have vowed to "stand in solidarity" with the scores of thousands of people who started gathered from morning at various points around Dataran Merdeka for the sit-in slated to being at 2pm today.

According to netizens, more than 1,200 supporters have assembled at the St Paul's Court, Federation Square in Melbourne, while hundreds more are reported to have gathered at Martin's Place in Sydney in eastern Australian by 2pm Malaysian time.

NONThe rally in Melbourne was abuzz with music performances and speeches from left-wing politicians.

"The Malaysian diaspora is not allowed to vote in the Malaysian elections. Only government officers posted abroad and full-time students and army officers abroad are allowed to vote," Melbourne Global Bersih coordinator David Teoh said in an interview with ABC Radio two days ago.

A concurrent show of force was also seen in Brisbane, Hobart, Canberra as well as in Perth in Australia, and in Auckland, New Zealand.

The sit-in at Aotea Square in Auckland at 1pm Malaysian time began with supporters singing the national anthem Negaraku.

In Hong Kong (pictures above), some 400 supporters gathered at the Sogo Department Store at Causeway Bay and began making their way to the Malaysian consulate office.

However, Malaysians in Singapore took their protest to the seafront off Johor Baru Waterfront City at 1.30pm, as the Singaporean authorities have denied them a police permit for the rally at the republic's Hong Lim Park.

200 march to embassy in Bangkok

In Thailand, more than 200 supporters marched to the Malaysian Embassy in Bangkok, joining groups of Malaysians in Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia in voicing their dissatisfaction over the election system.

Bersih supporters, some of them students, also gathered in small groups in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Jordan, Korea and China, armed with placards and posters in support of the cause for electoral reform.

More protests are scheduled to take place in the United States, Canada and Russia, as well as across 16 cities in Europe later today.

In Aceh in northern Sumatra, Indonesia, supporters took the event to new heights, with about nine divers photographed holding up a Bersih banner underwater at Pulau Weh.

In Kuala Lumpur, about 100,000 people took to the streets from morning and in the afternoon marched to gather around Dataran Merdeka.

Despite repeated warnings urging the crowd to disperse, the protesters stood their ground, causing the riot police to fire numerous rounds of tear gas canisters and chemical-laced water at them.

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