

**Tear gas and water cannon spray spoil blind man's day**  
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**By Alfred Ho**

As a blind and responsible citizen of Malaysia, I did what I had to do and that was to participate in the Bersih 3.0 peaceful demo on the afternoon of April 28, 2012.

Both me and my other half took the LRT train from Sri Petaling to Masjid Jamek and arrived there just after 2pm.

By the time we arrived at the above-mentioned station, a huge crowd had already congregated there to show their support.

The atmosphere was indeed fantastic as the participants were like one happy family and the concern for one another was indeed marvellous as we all joined the peaceful demo with one thing in mind and that was to help bring about clean and fair elections.

After marching for about half an hour, we finally arrived at Dataran Merdeka where there was a huge police presence and they were about to unleash their cruel acts on the peaceful participants of this rally.

As the crowds were chanting to have the barricades removed from Dataran Merdeka, suddenly, without warning or any provocation, the trigger happy police personnel released volleys of tear gas and chemical laced water on the peaceful demonstrators and needless to say I had to suffer several minutes of agony to the extent that I almost passed out at one stage.

Thanks to the kind comrades who were around me, both me and my wife were given towels and salt to help us in neutralising the caustic effects of the poisonous fumes of the tear gas and chemical laced water.

I must take this golden opportunity to thank the above mentioned comrades who came to my assistance during my hour of need.

As we were quite near to the barricades, my group bore the full brunt of the tear gas thus making it very difficult for us to breathe and somehow I felt a terrible pain in my tummy which almost caused me to pass out at one stage.

Thanks to the kind concern of the comrades around me I am able to survive to share my experiences.

The high handed manner in which the police discharged their duties is most reprehensible and must be condemned in the strongest terms.

Following our ordeal, we tried to seek shelter at the Masjid Jamek LRT station but unfortunately, the gates had already been shut.

Having failed in our attempt to seek refuge to escape the tear gas fumes, we decided to run to another building within the same vicinity and while making our way there, we were kindly assisted by some medics who were standing by, who gave us eyedrops and advice us as to how we should act in combating the fumes.

I must take my hat off to these brave individuals for their bravery and self sacrifice.

I must also not forget to thank the comrades around me for their kind generosity in distributing wet towels, salt and even isotonic drinks to those who needed them.

I am indeed touched by their noble acts.

We finally made our way to a building called Wisma Hamzah Kwong Hing where my comrades requested the guard to open the doors for us to seek refuge to which he flatly refused.

Several of us including yours truly were in quite a bad state and in spite of the pleas from my comrades to let us in, this inhumane guard refused to budge and stuck to his decision not to allow us to gain entry into the building.

Unfortunately, due to my predicament, I was unable to make friends with my very kind comrades, but finally when I had recovered sufficiently from my ordeal, I managed to speak to one, going by the name of Asma, who told me that she is a structural engineer by profession.

During our conversation, she told me she has nothing but disdain for this very despotic regime.

She was angered by the cruel actions of the police on the peaceful demonstrators, and just to please their political masters, the police had to act violently towards all the right thinking citizens who participated in this rally.

For the benefit of the readers of this article, I was interviewed by a reporter from one of the Chinese press where I was given the opportunity to show my revulsion for this very uncaring and dictatorial regime.

Even the young reporter shared my sentiments and felt that we should do more to effect change.

When I told the reporter that if a blind person is aware of the fact that we are ruled by a corrupt and racist government, then all the more, able bodied citizens should take a pro-active stance to vote out this very irresponsible and unpopular regime.

At this juncture, I wish to take this golden opportunity in paying tribute to all the selfless individuals, who against all odds, both sacrificed their time and took the trouble to attend this very meaningful rally.

So my dear friends, please do your duty by giving your votes to Pakatan Rakyat during the forthcoming general election with the hope that all citizens will be treated equally regardless of race or religion.

Finally, I wish to inform all readers that I have two videoclips to back up my article and you can see them on my Facebook page or my blog.

You can also watch these two videoclips on my YouTube channel (alfredho1111).

I also wish to inform all readers that I also participated in the first Bersih rally in 2007.

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