

**Joy in seeing spirit of Bersih in so many
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By A True Malaysian Pastor**

After having rested and had time to reflect on Bersih 3.0, I have come to the following conclusions.

Compared to Bersih 2.0

1. It was so much easier to mobilise my church members to go. Many who regretted not taking part in Bersih 2.0 out of "fear", managed to overcome the invisible fear barrier and made their physical presence felt.
2. We were much better prepared physically, spiritually, emotionally and psychologically for Bersih 3.0 compared to 2.0.
3. As a church we could openly pray about the situation and condition of our beloved nation and where it is heading.
4. There was obviously more Chinese people present this time around.
5. More young people were in attendance.
6. More recording devices were evident.
7. People came much earlier.
8. More food stalls were open this time around and did a roaring business eg along Petaling street.
9. Bersih 3.0 merchandise were freely sold and quickly snapped up.
10. The LRT station remained open initially, making it easier to reach the various venues.

For Bersih 3.0 :

1. The turnout was very very impressive and awe inspiring to me. At Bersih 2.0, space was not exactly an issue as one could freely walk around - full but not packed.

At Bersih 3.0 it was sardine-packed - standing room only. Whenever they called people to "duduk-bantah" we all had a good laugh because there was just no space to sit down. The joke was the only way to get more space was if one fainted - then the people around will create space for you.

2. The good mix of people who turned out - irrespective of race, religion, age were all well represented. I was personally very encouraged to see so many young people participating in Bersih 3.0. This speaks well for the future and hope of our nation - our youths have come of age and are willing to make a stand for the sake of nation building.

To get them up and out on a Saturday walking far distances and standing in the hot sun without fans and airconditioning - that they were willing to do just that is very telling and our leaders need to take note of that. To be fair many brought along their play-toys - smartphones, iPads etc which they put to good use.

3. The number of smartphones and iPads being held up to record all and sundry that was happening all around them - this did not happen during Bersih 2.0 or was not so evident then.

4. Many travelled from far away states to attend Bersih 3.0 in KL. In talking to the people around me, tried to see where they were from, I think I encountered people from every state in Malaysia save possibly Perlis.

This is in spite of cancellation of chartered bus services due to the government's threats and intimidation and many having to travel overnight to attend. Just shows their commitment and dedication to the cause of Bersih 3.0 being mindful that this are simple country folks, possibly uneducated and not among the 'financially privileged' class.

5. Many people came extremely early and where I stood, at the junction of Jalan Tun Perak and Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman - it was already packed by about 12 noon, two hours before the scheduled starting time of 2pm.

That to me shows that people are willing to sacrifice if they are convinced of the importance of the cause at hand - clean and fair elections coupled with handling of the Lynas issue are obviously two such causes.

6. I would also venture to say that many in the crowd were just like me - forgoing lunch or it never even came to mind. Some who brought along biscuits shared what they had with people around and no one asked if it was 'halal' or not - all just ate and were satisfied.

7. We brought along yellow balloons which were freely distributed, blown up and hit into the air. Everyone had great fun hitting the yellow balloons and keeping them in the air - it had an air of festivity and celebration.

8. Up until the police/FRU starting using their water cannons and releasing their tear gas, it was nice, peaceful but cramped. No one complained and everyone was very tolerant, accommodating and understanding. There was no barrier, fear, apprehension or suspicion of the people standing next to you.

9. The tear gas this time around had a longer lasting effect than previously - my guess: possibly they changed to a more potent variety or brand.

10. Again the best of human nature was evident even in the midst of a trying teary situation - sharing of water and salt, looking out for one another, asking people to move on but not to push, making way for the elderly, etc, were once again evident this time around.

Ten Questions to ask of our government:

1. Why was the government so protective of Dataran Merdeka - a piece of green field that normally is open to any Ahmad, Ah Kow and Mathu to walk into, take pictures etc?

2. Why was there a need to get a last minute one-sided court order to protect what is literally a 'padang' for a very limited time span?

3. When the home minister had stated and reiterated that Bersih 3.0 was no threat to security, why was there a need for all the police action?

4. The home minister has also stated and reiterated that Bersih 3.0 had no "traction with the people", why did the police go overboard in handling it?

5. For those who broke through the "barricade" - why not just arrest them (more than enough police personnel around for that purpose) and leave the vast peaceful majority who were not breaking any law along?

6. Why were some police personnel without name tags and numbers? Is it legal? What is there to hide or fear?

7. Why were media and press staff doing their lawful duty - prevented, threatened and even set upon by the police?

Cameras smashed, memory cards removed or smashed? And our home minister has the 'gall' to state that police were just following their SOP - what utter rubbish.

8. Why were some LRT stations ordered to close after the tear gas carnage was started? Was it the intention of the police to disperse the people (then you should leave the LRT station open so that people can leave easily and quickly) OR did the police intend to 'trap' the people to 'teach' them a lesson (if so then you close the LRT stations so people cannot leave easily).

9. Was it true that the airwaves were purposely jammed so that communication was hindered causing further confusion in the midst of a stressful situation. Are any of the telcos able or willing to clarify this situation. If it was actually done - then it just shows the mentality of those who ordered it.

10. Why was there a need for the police to literally chase and tear-gas isolated groups of people into the various sidelanes? If the bulk of people have dispersed from the main venue, then just protect your precious turf of grass and let things be.

As a sidenote - I will not be surprised if the grass and greenery in Dataran Merdeka turn brown and die in the coming days, not from the protesters but from the chemically laced water freely dispersed over the field.

This will be poetic justice as testimony to a regime in its death throes, that has lost touch with its own citizens and no longer exist for the sake and welfare of the people in the nation but only to guard and

maintain their own position and privileges.

God Bless Malaysia and her Citizens.

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