

**Police broke word by firing tear gas near Masjid Jamek**  
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**By Hafiz Yatim**

A senior police officer broke his word to allow the crowd at Masjid Jamek in the city centre to disperse by ordering tear gas to be fired at them, PKR vice-president and former health minister Chua Jui Meng claims.

When police fired tear gas and water cannons near Dataran Merdeka, Chua said the crowd fled to the nearby Masjid Jamek to seek refuge.

He said he too sought safety at Masjid Jamek with about 3,000 protesters.

pkr congress 271110 jimmy chua jui mengThe crowd then prevented the police from coming in as Masjid Jamek is a place of worship and there should be no clampdown there.

"Then I negotiated with a police officer holding the rank of assistant commissioner, wearing a name tag saying 'Jamal'. I told him the crowd would like to disperse and that the police should allow them a free and safe passage out of the area.

"Jamal agreed and we said this would be a gentlemen's agreement," Chua said.

"However, as the crowd started to leave the mosque peacefully, tear gas and water cannons were fired at them, and this Jamal who broke his promise was nowhere to be seen," he added.

Chua, formerly a long-time MCA vice-president, said he regretted that the police did not abide by their pledge as there were many senior citizens seeking refuge in the mosque.

He said another Federal Reserve Unit officer, a chief inspector named Sham, came with his men later and they negotiated again for a safe passage.

"The officer eventually allowed us to leave and disperse safely towards Jalan Tun Perak," Chua said.

Tear gas more stinging

Relating his experience during last Saturday's rally, Chua said the tear gas canisters used by the police were different from the ones used during Bersih 2.0, for the gas had a more severe impact.

"I think they used a different type of gas canisters on Saturday as it was stronger than those used in Bersih 2.0. It was more stinging to the eyes and resulted in many people suffering shortness of breath.

NONE"I too suffered difficulty in breathing and was choking. I thought I was going to die there as I felt a strong burning sensation in my lungs.

"There were many, many people at Bersih 3.0 and I could not run anywhere. I see that the government is taking punitive measures to punish the rakyat by using such devices," Chua said.

He questioned why tear gas was fired near the mosque, resulting in the fumes affecting the place of worship as well.

The former health minister also wants the government to explain the use of barbed wire, which he described as razor sharp and dangerous and could easily injure the people.

"What is the purpose? If one is hit in the eye by the wire, one can be blinded, or seriously injured if one falls on it," Chua added when visiting some of the affected Bersih protesters at Hospital Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

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