

## **Protester: Cop pulled out gun at rally in self-defence**

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**By Aidila Razak**

Another eye-witness to the incident where a handgun was pulled out at the Bersih 3.0 rally said that the traffic police officer who aimed his firearm at protesters had been provoked into doing so.

According to K Sudhagaran Stanley, who was near the Sogo shopping complex in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman at that time, other protesters were throwing rocks at the officer.

However, Stanley who witnessed the incident as he was walking away from the scene where a police patrol car had crashed into protesters believes that "instigators" were behind the attack.

"(The instigators) started to throw bottles and rocks at him. He immediately stopped and took out his gun and pointed it at those trying to throw (more) objects at him.

"I ran for shelter fearing that he might mistakenly shoot in my direction. The others in the crowd also ran away.

"If he had not taken out his gun, I think he would have also crashed into something and his injuries would probably be more serious, or he could have died," he said.

Stanley, who describes himself as a human rights activist, is thankful that the officer did not fire at anyone and left the scene after that.

"He was only a traffic police officer who was not involved in assaulting the public," he said in an email to *Malaysiakini*, corroborating *Berita Minggu's* account.

### **Close call from police**

Calling the rally "the largest and most violent" he has ever seen, Stanley said he had never been as scared in Malaysia as he was on that day; nor ever so proud.

The social worker's brush with the police came at about 6.30pm in Jalan Tun Perak while having dinner after the rally at Arenaa Dinner restaurant.

"We were there for half an hour when suddenly a few police officers who were chasing after protesters outside the restaurant noticed me sitting inside, wearing a Bersih T-shirt.

"They then came towards the restaurant to get me. The restaurant owner had earlier locked all the doors preventing anyone from entering it.

"Around 20 police officers kicked the glass door and were trying to break it open to get me. I was terrified," he said.

He said the cops had yelled at him to surrender but he was afraid of being "beaten to death by these rowdies" after seeing incidences of brutality on the streets.

He then headed to the toilet to change his Bersih T shirt but mistook the back door for the toilet door.

"Around five police officers were forcing the door against me and managed to open it... They then entered to get me, but were distracted by a few other protesters outside the restaurant who were running away and headed towards them. Thank God for that," he said.

He added that he then remained in the restaurant for about an hour with other patrons including tourists "terrified by the police action".

### **'We will continue to rise'**

His account jells with *Merdeka Review* reporter Chen Shaua Fui's claim that police were dragging people wearing Bersih T shirts out of restaurants at about 7pm in Jalan Tun Perak.

Chen said she was manhandled by four male police officers when attempting to photograph police dragging and assaulting protesters busy tucking into food once the demonstration was over.

Despite the trauma of the violence he had witnessed, Stanley still supports Bersih's demands and maintains that the rally was peaceful before the shooting of tear gas spoilt it all.

He said that he had come to the rally for clean and fair elections because he personally knows Burmese refugees who have been issued Malaysian citizenship, in what he alleges is a plot to cheat in the polls.

"The call to free and fair elections must be adhered to. We will continue to rise if the government fails to fulfill our demands. We are now stronger because we have united! United as one family. One Malaysian family!"