

Innocent people sought by police, laments DAP

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By Leven Woon

The police's list of 141 individuals wanted over the Bersih 3.0 rally has come under fire for comprising a number who are allegedly innocent.

DAP at a press conference today brought forward a Hindraf leader, one of the 141, to back their claims that the wanted list is erroneous.

Hindraf's V Ganabatirau (*left*), who is also Selangor DAP state committee member, was in one of the photos on the police wanted list released on May 4, and was brought to the KL police headquarter two days ago for a three-hour interrogation.

He said he was accused of breaking police barricades placed at the intersection between Jalan Raja and Jalan Tun Perak during the mammoth rally for electoral reform.

However, he claims that the photograph of him was taken at around 1pm, before the commotion began.

"By the time the commotion started at 3pm, I had already gone to have my lunch," he claimed.

Ganabatirau, an Internal Security Act (ISA) detainee over the 2007 Hindraf rally, said the police had asked about the object he was seen holding in the photo, to which he duly replied that it was a microphone.

"They asked me what I was doing; I said singing Bersih songs.

Ganabatirau said from the line of questioning, the police seemed to be gathering information on his upcoming protest on Indian poor, dubbed Indraf 2.0, rather than Bersih 3.0.

"They kept asking me whether I am going to hold the rally at Dataran Merdeka. When I said it will be in Brickfields, they seemed so relieved," he said.

The police released him on the same day without indicating any charges.

‘Victimising innocent protestors’

Ganabatirau's experience as well as recent reports on certain wanted individuals showed that the police are victimising innocent protestors in a bid to paint Bersih 3.0 as riot, said Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua, who chaired the press conference.

He urged the police to spare the innocent suspects unnecessary interrogation and immediately commence a probe on police brutality that is backed by copious evidence.

“So far only one blur picture of a police (offender) was released. Instead of arresting that guy, they are asking the public to help them to identify who is he.

“This is a joke,” said Pua.

Commenting on the newly set up independent panel to probe violence during Bersih 3.0, Pua said the appointment of former inspector-general of police Hanif Omar as its head proves that it will not be an independent panel.

“It is a clear case of a cover up by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, the panel and the police,” he said.

DAP also advised individuals on the wanted list who did not commit any offence during Bersih 3.0 to exercise their right to sue the government for defamation.

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