

**Memo on police brutality handed over to Suhakam  
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The Abolish ISA Movement (GMI) and Suara Rakyat Malaysia (Suaram) today handed over a memorandum to the Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) to complain against police brutality during Aug 1 mass arrests.

The non-governmental organisations claimed that the police force had abused their power and misused the Light Strike Force (LSF) when arresting peaceful protestors during the candlelight vigils to commemorate the Internal Security Act's (ISA) 50th anniversary.

NONEGMI chairperson Syed Ibrahim Syed Noh (right in photo with Muhammad Sha'ani Abdullah) pointed out some of the violations by the police at the Suhakam office today.

"Many participants were treated with force, with some of them beaten up and injured, resulting in 39 people being arrested without reason in Petaling Jaya, Kelantan and Penang. This included two underaged children who were detained for a few hours in the police station.

"Those arrested and their lawyers were not informed of the reasons for their arrest," he told Suhakam commissioner Muhammad Sha'ani Abdullah and reporters.

Syed Ibrahim highlighted that the police had infringed on freedom of assembly by setting up roadblocks and arresting civilians during a peaceful assembly.

"Lawyers were also intimidated by the police when they were asked to give statements although they were only representing their clients. The fact that two children were arrested is a violation of their rights," he added.

penang isa vigil 010810 vigil in front of jelutong police station The groups are demanding that Suhakam conduct a public inquiry on the police for their Aug 1 actions and submit a report to the government so that disciplinary action can be taken against those who used violence against the participants.

"Suhakam should pressure the government to restudy the Penal Code and Police Act 1967 and repeal sections that restrict freedom of speech and assembly.

"The commissioners should continue their observation of every peaceful assembly and to be the middleman between the organiser and the authorities to lessen the friction between the two parties," Syed Ibrahim added.

'Reactivate human rights defenders role'

gmi indonesian embassy memo isa detainees 180108 e nalini Suaram coordinator E Nalini (right), who was one of those arrested during the vigil, said that it is important to reactivate the 'human rights defenders' role in Suhakam.

"This is vital because we activists are often targeted by the authorities. Also, when you are charged in court, it is imposed on us that we cannot participate in any assemblies during this period," she said.

Parti Socialis Malaysia central committee member V Selvam concurred, and added that police often targeted activists to intimidate them.

"I have been arrested 20 times but have not committed any crime," he said, adding that it is about time things change.

Muhammad Sha'ani, who received the memorandum, said that the commission will use this information to

add to their follow-up report on the matter.

The commissioner, who was also present to observe the vigil in Petaling Jaya, explained that the police had informed them earlier that no permit had been given to the organisers and that action will be taken against participants.

anti-isa vigil in petaling jaya amcorp mallAt the vigil, police had requested him to disperse the participants. "But I told him that Suhakam did not have the power to do so. We were told that action will be taken against even Suhakam if we participate. However, we still went to observe," he said.

Muhammad Sha'ani added that the police's actions seem to suggest that they do not take Suhakam seriously.

"Of course we feel insulted but we still have to continue this struggle," he added.

Also present were Penang Suaram representative Ong Jing Cheng and Batu PKR Youth chief Rozan Azen Mat Razip, who were among those arrested.

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