

Viva Palestina convoy: Egyptian police free M'sian
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Ibrahim Mohd Azmi, a Malaysian citizen who was arrested by the Egyptian authorities for being involved in a protest demonstration on Tuesday in El-Arish port, was freed at 3.30pm the next day.

A medical student at Bristol University, United Kingdom, he appeared tired after having been detained for almost 15 hours at a police station near here and the first thing he did on reaching back the Egyptian port city was to call his family back home in Malaysia.

He then rejoined the Viva Palestina convoy which is awaiting clearance to continue its journey to Rafah on the Palestinian border before entering Gaza to deliver humanitarian aid to the people there.

Interviewed by Bernama TV, he said he was thankful to be released and described his detention as "not so bad" compared to other members of the convoy.

He said he was not given any food or drinks during the duration of his detention and his handphone was also confiscated.

"Thank God, it was not too bad. Getting beaten when detained in a lock-up for up to 15 hours is quite normal. Without the handphone, I was incommunicado," he said.

In the incident which happened at 11.40pm (local time) Tuesday, more than 10 members of the 'Viva Palestina' convoy were injured, four of them seriously, and seven were detained by the Egyptian police including Ibrahim.

Agreement reached

The protest on Tuesday was reportedly staged by Viva Palestina convoy members to protest against the decision by the Egyptian government to bar 59 convoy vehicles from leaving here for Gaza.

Egyptian police were said to have acted strongly against the convoy members three hours after the protest was staged at the entry and exit security point at the port.

The four seriously injured were brought to a nearby hospital for treatment.

At the time of filing this report, the convoy is still stuck in the port area waiting for the green light from the Egyptian authorities to make the 40km journey to Rafah.

Negotiations on the matter between the Egyptian authorities, the convoy's representatives lead by its founder George Galloway and representatives from Turkey have ended.

In the end, Viva Palestina had to accede to the Egyptian's request to leave behind the 59 heavy vehicles of the 220-vehicle convoy in Egypt.

Galloway said an agreement was reached to have them re-routed to Palestinian refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon.

- *Bernama*

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