

34 arrested at candlelight vigils go free
Malaysianmirror.com
02 August 2010

PETALING JAYA - All 34 people detained by the police while attending candlelight vigils in Selangor and Penang to mark Sunday's 50th anniversary of the Internal Security Act (ISA) have been released.

Four of them in Penang were released just after midnight while the 30 in Selangor were released later on Monday.

Among those detained on Sunday night were Gerakan Mansuhkan ISA chairman Syed Ibrahim Syed Noh and PKR supreme council member Badrul Hisham Shahrin.

Those who took part in the vigil had earlier gathered at the entrance of Amcorp Mall in Petaling Jaya at about 7pm on Sunday and were moving towards Dataran MBPJ, Padang Timur, when they were stopped by police.

After the group refused to budge despite being told to disperse, Federal Reserve Unit and light strike force personnel started moving in.

The people then started singing "Negaraku" and shouted "Mansuh, mansuh, mansuhkan ISA!" before a scuffle broke out.

As the group headed towards the back of the shopping mall, police formed a barricade outside its main entrance.

The group later tried to come out from the mall but were prevented from doing so by the police.

Suhakam commissioner James Nayagam said its presence during the vigil was to ensure there was no abuse by police.

Earlier Sunday, Syed Ibrahim claimed that the group had been given permission to gather at the field by the Petaling Jaya City Council.

However, OCPD Asst Comm Arjunaidi Mohamed said the council did not have the authority to do so.

"We stopped them, so they went back into the mall. After a while, they marched back out and we had no choice but to take action. They were challenging us," ACP Arjunaidi told reporters.

The group later dispersed at around 9.10pm Sunday.

In Penang, four people were arrested while taking part in the vigil held at Speaker's Square in the Esplanade, which started about 8.40pm, according to The Star.

Deputy Inspector-General of Police Ismail Omar had earlier warned the organisers not to proceed with the vigil.

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