

DAP Calls For Suhakam Public Inquiry
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Yesterday, I had harboured the thought and hope that Malaysia was maturing as a democracy and can equal that of developed countries, with Kuala Lumpur comparable to London and New York, where peaceful assemblies and gatherings involving thousands, tens of thousands and even hundreds of thousands of people, could be held with the full understanding and even co-operation of the police authorities.

This thought came to me when on the way from the Masjid Negara meeting point towards Dataran Merdeka, together with other Pakatan Rakyat leaders Anwar Ibrahim, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Awang Hadi and Mat Sabu, we saw a veritable celebration not only of Malaysian democracy but Malaysian nationhood – with Malaysians transcending race, religion, politics, age or gender, coming together in a common universal cause for clean, free and fair elections for a clean Malaysia.

But this thought and hope that the Bersih 3.0 "sit-in" will be an international badge of honour of a maturing Malaysian democracy proved ephemeral as it was pulverized very shortly after in the disproportionate and indiscriminate firing of police tear gas at peaceful protestors for free and fair elections massed outside Dataran Merdeka.

Clearly, the breach of the Dataran Merdeka barricade, for which commensurate action could be taken, is no justification for the release of the violent events, like the disproportionate and indiscriminate firing of police tear gas, the police mass arrests and attacks on peaceful protestors including those who had dispersed and were on their way home, the "heavy-handed" attack and targeting of journalists as well as incidents where police personnel were targets of attacks.

For this reason, DAP calls for an immediate and comprehensive Suhakam public inquiry into the indiscriminate firing of police tear gas at Dataran Merdeka leading to a chain of violence marring the successful peaceful holding of a 200,000 people Bersih 3.0 Dataran Merdeka "sit-in" for free and fair elections.

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