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# Violence flares up at Dr M talk

Three suspects arrested after fracas

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**SHAH ALAM:** The Nothing to Hide 2.0 forum featuring Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was touted as a non-holds barred session. It descended into an almost free-for-all session as a slipper, a shoe, bottles and a chair were thrown and two flares were flung into the crowd at the Dewan Raja Muda Musa hall here.

The session with the Pakatan Harapan chairman had to be halted abruptly after about 90 minutes when the former prime minister was answering a question on the 1985 Kampung Memali tragedy in Baling, Kedah.

He had been asked if he would take responsibility for the bloodshed which left 18 people, including four policemen, dead.

Dr Mahathir, who was standing on the stage, responded that police action at that time was done according to their standard operating procedures.

But even as he started speaking, a slipper was flung from the crowd towards the stage, followed by a shoe, several mineral water bottles and a chair.

The hall erupted into chaos as two flares were also thrown, one of them towards the section where members of the media were seated.

Several Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia members immediately rushed to the stage and escorted Dr Mahathir and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Pribumi deputy president Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang and secretary-general Lim Guan Eng out to safety via the back entrance of the hall.

Shouts were heard among the audience, including from a group of youths wearing Pribumi's Armada (youth wing) T-shirts as they gave chase to several individuals. A youth wearing a similar T-shirt was seen being assaulted at the parking area outside while a shirtless youth was chased by a mob back into the hall and beaten up.

Pribumi Youth chief Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman told a press conference later that the incident was a clear sabotage attempt.

He said the event organiser adhered to all requirements set by the police in organising the forum, which was open to public participation.

"Apart from police permit, we had Rela volunteers and 150 members from Pakatan Harapan in charge of security.

"The culprits behind the chaos are not Pribumi or Pakatan members. They were wearing fake Armada T-shirts," he said.

Shah Alam OCPD Asst Comm Shafien Mamat confirmed that three youths aged 17, 18 and 19, had been arrested.

"The three, two of whom are college students, were nabbed by members of the public before they being handed over to police," he said.

ACP Shafien noted that the organisers have been briefed on the requirements, which included ensuring the safety of all participants.

"We will summon the forum organisers to have their statements taken soon," he said.

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