

RM2m spent on 11,000 cops to stop Bersih rally, Parliament told
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 4 — The government spent more than RM2 million to “handle” the outlawed rally by electoral reform group Bersih 2.0 in July, it was revealed today.

More than 11,000 police officers were also deployed in the days leading up to the rally on July 9.

In a written reply in Parliament to Teresa Kok (DAP-Seputeh), Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said today the total amount spent by the police to “handle” the rally was RM2,018,850.06.

He added that a total of 11,046 police officers from all over the country were stationed in the Klang Valley area, including 2,600 who were on standby outside the city.

“PDRM had to make preparations which included expenditure for additional fittings, food and drinks, lodging and other logistic needs,” he said.

The protest turned chaotic when the police fired tear gas and water cannon at thousands of demonstrators, resulting in nearly 1,700 arrests, scores injured and the death of ex-soldier Baharuddin Ahmad, 59.

Bersih estimates that 50,000 people showed up at the July 9 rally for free and fair elections despite government efforts to prevent it from taking place while the police have said there were only 6,000.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has since gone to great lengths to try and win back middle Malaysia after international condemnation of the clampdown on the rally.

In the wake of the rally, Najib had promised to reform the country’s election process, a key demand of Bersih 2.0, followed by sweeping changes to security and press laws, a move he said was to increase civil liberties in the country.

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