

'They would not stop hitting me'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Bersih 3.0 demonstrators continued to beat TV Al-Hijrah videographer Mohd Azri Mohd Salleh during the rally, even when he was lying on the ground and offering no resistance.

"I was already on the ground and I received blow after blow all over my body. I did not even fight back," Mohd Azri told reporters from his bed at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

"I told them *sakit lah, jangan pukul* (it hurts, please don't hit me) but no one heard me and they never stopped. It went on for a minute or two," he said.

Relating what happened, Mohd Azri said he was on his motorcycle and filming some demonstrators attacking a police car.

"It was near the Sogo shopping complex. I saw the car going out of control and crashing. Although I realised that the situation was dangerous, I knew I had to go the driver's rescue because he was alone.

"I tried to push the demonstrators aside to stop them from attacking the policeman but they pulled me away and started beating me," said Mohd Azri, adding that he was still wearing his crash helmet at the time.

"They thought I was an ally of the policeman. I was merely a sympathetic human being," he added.

Mohd Azri said he managed to hold onto his video camera the entire time that he was assaulted.

"I think it is a cameraman's instinct. We hold on to our cameras first in such situations. The LCD screen is broken but the video tape is still intact," said Mohd Azri.

The terrifying incident has not deterred Mohd Azri from covering such rallies in the future.

"I understand this as a job hazard, so I will not give up. I would even go to Gaza (in Palestine) if you send me," said Mohd Azri.

Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek and Deputy Health Minister Datuk Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin were among those who visited Mohd Azri yesterday.

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