

**Police Deal With Rowdy Protestors Professionally, Says Hishammuddin
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 29 (Bernama) -- The police have dealt with rowdy illegal protestors professionally despite provocations, said Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein.

He commended the police for being unfazed despite being tormented by about 20,000 protestors.

"I am saddened over what had happened today, the organisers had promised that the demonstration would be a peaceful one, but it turned unruly although the government had given its best to allow them to gather peacefully.

"They were adamant and forced their way to the Merdeka Square," he told reporters here.

The police foiled attempts by protestors to break through a barricade and barbed wires laid around the Merdeka Square, which was declared a restricted area till Tuesday by a court order.

Hishammuddin said he regretted that the organisers and protestors had put public safety at stake in the interest of a minority.

He said they would have to "pay the price" for putting the safety of the majority of the public at risk just to champion their basic rights.

"I am saddened that even though the government has embarked on transformation efforts like abolishing the Internal Security Act and introduced the Peaceful Assemblies Act, it has been exploited by irresponsible parties to invite people to join street demonstrations and endanger public safety.

"What the public needs to see clearly is that what the organisers claimed would be a peaceful gathering was not the case," he said.

He said it was not easy for the government to uphold fundamental human rights and maintain public order and national security at the same time and that today's assembly did not affect either because of the police's ability to strike a balance.

According to the Federal police headquarters (Bukit Aman), as of 8pm, police had detained 388 participants of the illegal gathering and that they were brought to the Police Training Centre (Pulapol) here.

Meanwhile, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar congratulated all personnel involved for being firm, fair and cautious in dealing with the protestors.

Ismail said he was proud of the courage shown by policemen during the rally.

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