

**DAP says police caused riot at Bersih**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 2 — The DAP accused the police today of creating a riot at last Saturday's Bersih rally, comparing the force to criminal gangs and the Gestapo, Nazi Germany's secret police

Publicity chief Tony Pua called on Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein to apologise for the decision to bar the public from Dataran Merdeka, which resulted in an "unmitigated disaster" after police faced off with rally-goers, resulting in violence from both sides.

"The police force was acting like unrestrained mobsters, often with 10 or more police officers beating up an individual or two. It will not be an understatement to say that the police were creating a riot in the city.

"Do the police have a licence to beat up any person in the street as they like, regardless of whether a crime has been committed? Has our police force degenerated to become worse than the Gestapo?" the Petaling Jaya Utara MP said in a statement.

He called on the prime minister "who portrays himself as a reformist premier" to "take full responsibility for the police fiasco."

The Bar Council has said that its observers found that police brutality at last week's rally was "magnified" as compared to already chaotic scenes in a similar gathering for free and fair elections last July 9.

On Saturday, a pocket of 1,000 demonstrators had engaged in open battle with riot police near Masjid Jamek after 6pm, despite most of the crowd dispersing earlier.

A police officer was seen dragging a man across the road, which resulted in Bersih supporters attacking the police with broken bottles, mineral water bottles and broken concrete slabs.

A convoy of police vehicles ferrying Mayor Tan Sri Ahmad Fuad Ismail in one of its cars was forced to make a U-turn near Masjid Jamek when met with a hostile reception from protestors who threw shoes and broken concrete slabs at them, smashing the windows of two cars.

This occurred after police fired tear gas and water cannons to disperse tens of thousands of demonstrators, following a breach of the barricade in front of DBKL and rushed into Dataran Merdeka, which the court had barred the public from entering across the weekend.

Police fired as far as the DBKL premises, which are across Jalan Parlimen, and the move broke up the crowd who fled helter-skelter but police chased them down at Jalan Tun Perak and Jalan Raja Laut.

Angry protestors later attacked a police car, which then crashed into at least two people while trying to flee.

After an ambulance took away the injured policemen, the protestors flipped the car over on its side but then fled after tear gas was fired.

Police have promised to investigate all claims of police violence "openly and be fair to all", although Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar previously said that had the police not acted to disperse the crowd, an "open battle could have happened and created a more dangerous situation."

But Pua pointed out today "some who were already in an LRT station to return home were chased, arrested and taken to narrow alleys to be beaten up silly."

"While no Malaysian will blame the police for arresting those who damaged police or public property... there is absolutely no justification for them to threaten and beat up every person they found in yellow, even if they were participating in the rally earlier.

"The very people who were entrusted to protect innocent and ordinary Malaysians were turning on them," he said.

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