

**Rally peaceful as promised, insists Himpunan Hijau**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**April 30, 2012**  
**By Anisah Shukry**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 — Anti-Lynas Corp activists maintained they had kept their pledge for a peaceful rally on Saturday, apportioning all blame to the police for the “uncalled-for” violence that erupted in the city.

Himpunan Hijau highlighted that Bersih protesters had been “peaceful, calm and well-controlled” until the police displayed “violent behaviour” once people began leaving.

The group had joined its cause of fighting the Australian miner’s rare earth refinery in Kuantan, with the larger Bersih movement for electoral reforms.

“Up until the very last day prior to the Bersih 3.0 and Himpunan Hijau 3.0 event, we reiterated our strongest commitment that it will be peaceful.

“True to call, we witnessed the greatest display of discipline and behaviour from all rally participants,” Himpunan Hijau said today in a press statement.

Its chairperson, Wong Tack, said he was “heart-broken” over the “seemingly untrained” police’s “ill-behaviour” towards the “peace-loving crowd”.

“Why punish all those people and create so much harm just because of a minor violation of law by a few?” he said.

He also questioned the police’s inability to control “the few” who allegedly challenged them by entering Dataran Merdeka, adding that the most the “empty-handed” protesters could do upon entering the cordoned-off field was to sit there.

“It is very clear, as gathered from the various mounting evidence currently emerging...that the violent behaviour from the police force was totally uncalled for,” said Himpunan Hijau.

The group further claimed that government leaders were portraying the peaceful rally negatively by “falsely projecting” incidents such as a group of protesters flipping a police car on its side, as violent.

“Based on video clip evidence posted in YouTube, the police car was actually flipped over by concerned citizens who suspected that someone was trapped under the car.”

“Therefore, we call upon all to not instigate and worsen the situation by hiding the true facts,” it said.

The Bersih rally for free and fair elections turned chaotic when Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) personnel began firing tear gas and water cannons after demonstrators breached police lines in their attempt to reach Dataran Merdeka.

The event was initially planned for the historic square but authorities had secured a court order on Friday barring its use for public assemblies until May 1, forcing Bersih supporters to splinter into groups.

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