

I didn't leave because other detainees needed my help, says Tian Chua
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Batu Member of Parliament Chua Tian Chang, who was charged with disobeying police a day after the Bersih 3.0 rally, told the court today that he refused to budge despite being ordered to because other protesters who were arrested needed his assistance.

He told the Sessions Court that he remained at the Police Training Centre (Pulapol) despite being released earlier because there were many Bersih supporters who were still being detained.

The PKR vice-president, better known as Tian Chua, said some of the detainees were also suspicious about the police and his experience with the authorities came in handy.

"Some of them did not understand the documentation procedures while some were unsure when they would be freed," he said during-cross examination by deputy public prosecutor Mohd Dusuki Mokhtar.

He said the detainees who were picked up at various parts of Kuala Lumpur earlier in the day were also injured and needed help.

"Some of them were from outstation and their family members and friends were waiting outside Pulapol," he said.

Tian Chua said this when asked why he insisted on staying put at the place when he was freed from custody about 12.30pm on April 29 last year.

He said he needed to be around as the detainees, some from political parties and non-governmental organisations, needed to be assured of legal assistance if they were charged in court.

Tian Chua is charged with disobeying an order issued by Deputy Superintendent A. Rajakopal to move away from the Pulapol area, a location declared a restricted area under the Protected Areas Order 1975.

If convicted he could face a jail term of up to two years or a RM1,000 fine or both.

On October 29, Sessions Court Judge Mahmud Abdullah ordered him to enter his defence as the prosecution had established a prima facie case.

The prosecution had revealed that Tian Chua sneaked into a hall and instigated others not to board buses provided by the police. He was arrested when he refused to leave the place.

Today, he disagreed to a suggestion by Dusuki that the police could have handled the matter and he should have left when ordered.

"Detained Bersih supporters will be more comfortable when a leader is around to offer assistance and advice," he said.

Dusuki asked Tian Chua whether he knew he was the only person charged although police

arrested 512 people.

"Yes I was arrested but it is for the public prosecutor to decide whether to charge me or not," he said.

Re-examined by counsel Latheefa Koya, Tian Chua said Rajakopal had allowed him to stay provided the other detainees were not instigated.

"However, I informed him that I will respond to their queries," he said, adding that Rajakopal never told him that Pulapol was a restricted area.

He said he informed the police officer that detainees would like to be sent to the main entrance of Pulapol where friends and relatives were waiting or else everyone wanted to walk.

The defence will call lecturer Wong Chin Huat on September 3 before closing its case.

Thousands had gathered for the Bersih 3.0 rally to demand electoral reforms.

Police had picked up Bersih supporters, including Tian Chua, and took them to Pulapol in several buses about 6.30pm on April 28.

Despite the police roadblocks, protestors gathered at several points in the city such as Masjid Negara, Masjid India, Pasar Seni, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre , Brickfields and Jalan Sultan before proceeding to Dataran Merdeka.

Police began using tear gas and water cannons to disperse the protesters before arresting those who refused to disperse. – July 23, 2013.

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