Baharudin heart attack not from tear gas, court told

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 20 — Former soldier Baharudin Ahmad's fatal heart attack during last year's July 9 Bersih 2.0 rally was not caused by tear gas, a pathologist told the Coroner's Court here today.

According to Bernama Online, Dr Khairul Anuar Zainun said this was because no trace of the chemical compound contained in tear gas was found on the deceased's body.

"I wanted to make sure if 2-chlorobenzylidene malononitrile chemical used in tear gas could cause heart attack on Baharudin and that was why I collected various samples, including tears and blood," Dr Khairul was quoted as saying in the report.

"However, there was no sign of tear gas found on Baharudin."

The pathologist who performed the autopsy at Hospital Kuala Lumpur added that Baharudin had sustained broken ribs on the day of his death.

Dr Khairul's testimony today corroborates what chemist Dr Mohd Sukri Hassan of the Petaling Jaya Chemistry Department told the court last month when he said the chemical known as CS (2-chlorobenzylidene malononitrile) was not detected during the two-week analysis of specimens taken from Baharudin.

Baharudin died while in the process of being detained by the police following the tumultuous rally in Kuala Lumpur. His was the only reported death during the gathering calling for electoral reforms in which police used tear gas and chemical-laced water to disperse protesters.

Baharudin's family assert that police were at least partly responsible for his death after they allegedly withheld medical aid from the stricken ex-soldier after he collapsed while escaping from tear gas and water cannon bombardment.

The inquest before Coroner Zulkipli Abdullah resumes tomorrow.