

**Reforms, then polls or face backlash, warns Bersih**  
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**By Joseph Sipalan**

The government must allow the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reform to finish its work before even thinking of calling snap polls, said Bersih 2.0.

NONEThe coalition's steering committee member Wong Chin Huat said the government must "respect the institution of Parliament" as ultimately it is Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's reputation on the line.

Wong stressed that he is very sure that voters will retaliate by voting against the ruling BN coalition if Parliament is dissolved before the PSC completes its work.

"I think we will see Bersih 3.0 in whatever form, an even bigger tsunami," he said, referring to the March 8, 2008, watershed general election that, for the first time, saw the opposition deny BN a two-thirds majority in Parliament.

Nazri criticised

Maria Chin Abdullah, who is also a Bersih 2.0 steering committee member, criticised Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Nazri Aziz for hedging the government's responsibilities in seeing the PSC through.

NONEBy saying that the reforms could be implemented after the 13th general election, Nazri (left) was indicating that he "failed to comprehend" the importance of an electoral system that commands public confidence, Maria said.

"Nazri's statement is in contradiction with Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's vision to make Malaysia the best democracy in the world," she said at a press conference at the Parliament lobby.

She said Bersih 2.0 wanted Najib to give his word that he will push back polls until the PSC's recommendations - including the coalition's eight demands - were implemented.

She also urged the PSC to hold public hearings in all states to collect evidence and views from as many Malaysians as possible.

"The 50,000 Malaysians who made their stand for electoral reform on July 9 must be given a chance to voice their dissatisfaction regarding the electoral system.

"We also urge the PSC to conduct consultations with civil society organisations, including Bersih 2.0," Maria added, and she reiterated Bersih's call for a royal commission of inquiry on electoral reforms.

psm gst forum 210110 d jeyakumarMeanwhile, Sungai Siput MP Dr D Jeyakumar (left) who was also at the press conference, urged the Election Commission to carry out its own work to improve on the country's electoral roll and system.

Jeyakumar said contrary to repeated claims by EC officials, the commission has powers under existing laws to hold inquiries and implement reforms without having to wait for the PSC to finish its work.

"The EC can take proactive action based on existing laws. It can open inquiries at state level... we hope the EC will not use the PSC as an excuse to not do what it can," he said.

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