

**Ambiga to testify before PSC on Saturday**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**November 10, 2011**  
**by Hazlan Zakaria**

S Ambiga, the chief of the outlawed pro-electoral reform movement Bersih 2.0, has been called to appear before the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reform at its public hearing tomorrow.

"Eleven parties have confirmed their appearance, and this includes... Ambiga," said committee chairperson Maximus Johnity Ongkili.

In a statement issued later this evening, however, Bersih's steering committee clarified that they will be presenting their submission on the second day of the public hearing, Nov 12, rather than tomorrow as indicated by Ongkili.

At press conference held earlier today after chairing a five-hour-long meeting of the PSC at Parliament House, Ongkili said the other parties slated to appear before the parliamentary committee during the public hearing from 9.30am to 5pm include the BN component MCA, PAS Youth, Malaysian Youth Council, the Ex-Policemen's Association and Transparency International Malaysia.

The public hearing will go on for two days from tomorrow. All told, 200 parties have voiced their interest in testifying.

"The hearing tomorrow will observe rules and standing orders, as in a Parliament sitting, giving a chance for the people to debate for 10, 20 minutes each with the MPs," said the science and technology minister.

Ongkili said today's meeting saw the Election Commission (EC), the National Registration Department (NRD) and the Home Ministry appearing as witnesses.

However, he declined to provide details, saying these must be kept under wraps as they are developments in an ongoing investigation.

"But the public hearing tomorrow will be free for the media to cover," the Kota Marudu MP said, though he quickly clarified that the committee would meet behind closed doors when mulling its conclusions on the public hearing.

Attorney-general to be called

Ongkili said that after the two days of public hearings, the attorney-general would be called to advise the committee, on Tuesday, "on the legal and constitutional aspects" of proposed reforms.

Met by reporters after the press conference, Rasah MP Anthony Loke said the AG's advice would be related to the Pakatan members' push for an interim order from the the committee to compel the EC to implement ready reforms, such as the indelible ink and advance voting, right away.

The government and EC have long contended that technical reforms to the electoral process, such as the use of indelible ink, could only be implemented with constitutional or legal amendments as these would contravene existing provisions, though the opposition has accused the government of just dragging its feet over the matter.

The PSC had earlier refused to meet with Bersih 2.0, which had been outlawed by the government. However it has said it would welcome Ambiga as an individual.

However, Ambiga has vowed to continue to represent Bersih and submit the group's eight demands on reforming the election system to the committee.

The committee is due to submit an interim report on its findings before the end of the current parliamentary sitting and has six months to conclude its recommendations for the reform of Malaysia's much-criticised electoral system.

It has also scheduled six more public hearing sessions, for which it will tour the nation to acquire public input on the matter.

Copyright © 1999-2011 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/181027>