

**Don't prejudge PSC report, Maximus tells Bersih**  
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**By Hazlan Zakaria**

Parliamentary select committee (PSC) for electoral reform chairperson Maximus Ongkili told the electoral reform pressure group, Bersih, not to stage Bersih 3.0 until they have studied the contents of the committee's recommendations.

"I think we shouldn't pre-empt the report in the first instance, we have allowed them to meet us, a few of their members also followed us to our public hearings.

"To be honest, we received useful input from them. They should look at the report before any judgments are made," Ongkili told reporters in Parliament house after presiding over the PSC's final meeting.

Ongkili also hoped that all parties, including Bersih, would understand the challenges faced by the committee

"We were only given six months and we have worked very hard. All members have worked very hard... You have to see that if you want to make it into the list, there are more than 200 other suggestions.

He explained that the committee had to sort through the more than 200 recommendations and pick those that are "important, urgent, and can be implemented in the current legal and constitutional framework".

Ongkili related that what they have done may not be perfect but can serve as a reference for future improvements as all recommendations, included or not in the final report, are recorded for posterity.

"All documents are recorded in the enclosure. Not only in the Hansard. The document itself is used as an exhibit of this sitting and it can be used as reference for the young and future MPs and scholars."

He was responding to a question on threats by Bersih to stage another rally should its list of eight electoral reform recommendations are not included in the PSC report.

Ongkili had earlier chaired a marathon five-hour meeting the last for the committee before it tables its recommendations to the Dewan Rakyat.

Final report for MPs on Monday

He said that the document listing 22 recommendation to reform Malaysia's electoral system is ready and will be distributed to MPs on Monday next week and will be tabled at the Dewan proper several days later, subject to the speaker's pleasure.

Ongkili related that out of the total, some recommendations were passed unanimously by the committee, though some had met with contention and were only passed via majority vote.

Meanwhile, a source close to the committee, who refused to be named, told reporters that part of the spirited discussion that drove the meeting into extra time was because some committee members had asked for a minority report to be issued by the committee to represent those who dissented.

Met after the meeting, the source confirmed that out of the 22 recommendations, only six to seven faced opposition, though opponents of the recommendations argued that their concerns were fundamental to reforming the electoral system, such as cleaning the electoral roll and postal votes for the media.

This, the source described, is what drove them to press for a minority report, though it was eventually

rejected by the majority of the PSC.

The electoral reform pressure group had staged a massive rally in 2007 asking for reforms to Malaysia's much-criticised electoral system.

The mammoth gathering and the police response that many called disproportionate, was believed to have helped tip the scales in the opposition's favour and brought about the 2008 political tsunami.

Last year, the movement staged Bersih 2.0, and once again police response deemed excessive resulted in massive public support to the clamour for electoral reforms.

The PSC was formed shortly after, which many say was as a result of the increasing public pressure.

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