

'Let people decide make-up of Election Commission'

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The people should be allowed to play a role in determining who should be board members of the Election Commission, as well as those who hold senior posts in the body that registers voters and conducts the country's elections so that it will be more independent.

In making the call, PKR deputy secretary-general Steven Chong said the existing set-up of EC was questionable.

"The existing EC and the team of EC officers are seen as non-independent and subservient to the ruling regime because of to their past positions as civil or public servants," Chong said.

azlan"If our call is adopted, the EC board members, the chief registrar and the deputy, state election officers and their deputies, enforcement officers, adjudicating officers and the returning and presiding officers should be appointed either wholly or partially from among members of the public."

For this reason, Chong said, if the PSC adopts the proposals made by Pakatan Rakyat, Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih 2.0) and non-governmental organisations Tindak Malaysia and Ideas and revises the laws and implements new ones, the people would have a role in determining who works in the EC to make sure that it is truly independent.

This, he added, was among the key recommendations presented by all the parties in the nationwide public hearings of the parliamentary select committee on electoral reform. However, the recommendation was not adopted.

Efforts ignored

Choong said Bersih and Tindak Malaysia had drafted two new laws - Election (Advance Voting) Regulations and Election (Distance Voting) Regulations - and drafted amendments to five existing laws - Election Act, Election Offences Act, Election (Conduct of Elections) Regulations, Election (Registration of Electors) Regulations) and Election (Postal Voting) Regulations.

NONEThese draft laws were presented to the PSC at its nationwide hearings.

Choong argued that the proposed amendments to the Election (Registration of Electors) Regulations would be able to ensure that the electoral roll was "as clean as it could be".

It would require collaboration from the voters to come forward to verify the data in the electoral roll.

"The issue of phantom voters, double voting, impersonation and others would be significantly if not at all eliminated," he said.

Choong said that the efforts of Bersih and Tindak Malaysia had been ignored by the BN-majority PSC, which led him to conclude that the committee was not established to address Bersih's eight demands which fuelled the coalition's July 9 rally last year.

"Since it is now clear that a fair and clean election will not be in place for the 13th general election, it is understandable the Bersih 2.0 steering committee is left with no alternative but to call for another peaceful demonstration on April 28 at Dataran Merdeka," he said.

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