

## **Bersih, opposition spun our Bill out, decries EC**

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**By Kuek Ser Kuang Keng**

The withdrawal of Election Offences Amendment Bill is the result of the government succumbing to the “spin and lies” created by Bersih and the opposition, said the Election Commission deputy chairperson Wan Ahmad Wan Omar.

“They spun and twisted (the amendment), made nonsensical stories creating the perception that the Bill is bad...

“To satisfy all quarters, so they won’t be people saying it is fraud, the government took the best way... that is to discuss among BN, the opposition and the EC.

“If that is the best way the Parliament wants, never mind... the EC will just do it,” he said during a luncheon talk today in a Kuala Lumpur hotel.

Wan Ahmad (*right*) stressed that the EC will not introduce a Bill that will jeopardise the electoral system.

“They spun and spun, lied and lied to create strong pressure, so we were forced to withdraw.”

The three-hour talk entitled ‘Bersih 3.0: What else you want?’ was organised by the Department of Special Affairs (JASA), an agency under the Information, Communications and Culture Ministry and the Institute of Mind Development (Inmind), and attended by many JASA officers.

Whole nation will be in disarray

Yesterday, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department Nazri Abdul Aziz announced that the decision to abort the Bill was arrived at after a 10-minute meeting between the government, the opposition and the EC.

He tabled the motion to withdraw the Bill in the Dewan Negera today.

The Bill includes the proposal to remove the candidate’s agents from the EC registration booth and to remove the requirement for all printed materials to have printers’ and publishers’ details.

However, Wan Ahmad warned that retaining the requirement will bring the whole country into disarray during the election because there will be many campaigning banners without printing details, and taking action against those behind them will be a pain.

He explained that political parties should not be worried over the abolition of the requirement because the EC will form an enforcement team together with the contesting parties. It will have the power to remove any seditious or inappropriate material on the spot.

As for the retaining of candidate's agents in the registration booth, Wan Ahmad again warned that it will disrupt the voting process in some 8,000 polling centres nationwide because from previous experience, the candidate's agents would create trouble at the registration booth.

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