

Bersih 3.0 panel member to wait for terms of reference

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By Aidila Razak

A member of the independent panel set up to probe the April 28 Bersih 3.0 rally, Husamuddin Yaacob, says he will wait to see the terms of reference for the panel before deciding whether to stay on or to leave.

Speaking to Malaysiakini after a debate on higher education hosted by Malay daily Sinar Harian last night, Husamuddin, who is managing editor of the newspaper, said he does not want to hold any prejudice as the panel has yet to even convene its first meeting.

"We haven't even had a meeting. At least, I would like to know what the panel's responsibilities are, and to see the terms of reference first (before making any decision). I would prefer to assume the best," he said.

Husamuddin was responding to calls for members of the panel headed by former inspector-general of police Hanif Omar (left) to resign en masse in protest against Hanif's appointment to head the panel.

Hanif's appointment has been panned by critics who argue that the former police chief is seen as prejudiced against Bersih and the rally.

Hanif had, prior to his appointment, said he fears that the movement is backed by communist elements and that the rally for clean and fair elections was an attempt to overthrow the government.

Responding to the criticism, Hanif said his critics should check his track record in serving on similar investigative panels.

The former top cop was part of an eight-member panel that investigated the fatal shooting of 14-year-old Aminulrasyid Amzah.

Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein has maintained that the government would not bow the pressure and would retain Hanif as panel head.

Others on the panel are former Chief Judge of Borneo Steve Shim, Sin Chew group legal adviser Liew Peng Chuan, Petronas corporate affairs senior general manager Medan Abdullah and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia psychologist Dr Ruzmi Ismail.

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