

**Bersih wants consultation before EC forms special unit**  
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Electoral reform coalition Bersih 2.0 has urged the Election Commission (EC) to consult various stakeholders and consider the input from them before setting up the special unit to deal with issues pertinent to the much-criticised electoral roll.

"We also hope that the EC will regularly publish updates on the progress of this unit, so that the public can be properly informed ahead of the elections," said the coalition's steering committee headed by Ambiga Sreenevasan and national laureate A Samad Said in a statement issued today.

Yesterday, EC deputy chairperson Wan Ahmad Wan Omar (right) was reported as saying that the commission would form a special unit to manage the electoral roll with the help of the Public Services Department.

The announcement came after the EC held a special briefing with the MPs on Monday.

Bersih welcomed the EC's action of meeting with MPs and acknowledging the numerous discrepancies in the electoral roll.

"We are pleased that the EC is having open discussions with the MPs and hope that this process continues regularly."

On the EC's commitment that overseas Malaysians will be able to vote as postal voters in the next general election, Bersih said the initiative is long overdue and urged the commission to ensure that this will be resolved before the end of the current parliamentary session, which will come to a close next Friday.

However, the election watchdog reiterated its objections to the condition set by the EC that these voters must return to Malaysia at least once in a five-year period to be eligible to vote overseas.

"This requirement by the EC is not just unfair but also arbitrary. Such a ruling cannot be forced on voters merely based on the EC's assumptions that a Malaysian who lives abroad does not keep abreast with national politics.

"Thus, Bersih 2.0 views the latest moves by the EC as a step in the right direction, but only if the commission carries out these actions with the clear aim of ensuring clean and fair elections for all Malaysians," it added.

