

## **Bersih frowns on flying BN-1Malaysia flags**

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**By Koh Jun Lin**

Flags featuring the BN logo and the 1Malaysia logo together should be removed, said Bersih Special Committee on Code of Conduct co-chairperson Irene Fernandez.

"It cannot be now be used as a 'side logo' of BN. That is wrong. Those were programmes when they were in government, and that is what it is.

"You cannot continue to use the same logo as a political party," Irene (left) said at a press conference today.

These flags have been displayed in public places such as the along the roads surrounding the Bangsar LRT station.

It comprises a regular blue BN flag, but with the 1Malaysia logo on the right end of the flag against a white backdrop.

Irene also noted incidents where campaign materials of both BN and Pakatan Rakyat were vandalised, and said such materials should be respected in a democratic society.

She also said that campaign materials should not slander political opponents, such as flyers found calling Kuala Selangor incumbent MP Dzulkefly Ahmad a "PAS parasite".

"We should not be slandering any candidate but work towards committing oneself to principles and on the kind of government that would be created if you win the election," she said.

'Preserve sanctity of polls'

Meanwhile, Bersih co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan urged the Election Commission (EC) to issue a statement reassuring voters that their ballot is secret and explain how that secrecy is ensured.

She said this is necessary because 'mischievous persons' had been spreading rampant lies that their vote is not secret, and they would be subject to punitive action if they did not vote 'in a particular way'.

Purported reprisals include revoking scholarships, housing loans, or being sacked from their jobs.

Ambiga (left) advised those who have received such threats to vote against the party they were told to vote for, because the threats constitute a breach of their free will.

Bersih has also expressed disapproval of a circular dated April 9 by the Perak Education Department addressed to all district education officers and headmasters in the state.

It reminds the addressees of an earlier circular from the Director-General of Education's Office dated May 11, 1999, banning all its educators, support staff, and students from "anti-government political activities".

These include attending illegal assemblies, possessing or listening to recorded anti-government speeches.

Copies of both circulars were distributed to the media representatives at the press conference today.

Irene pointed out that there is no longer any government. What remained is a caretaker government, and the BN is standing in the election as political party alongside Pakatan Rakyat and other parties and Independents.

"Therefore, this circular should not have been issued," she said.

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