

Hold public demo on indelible ink, Bersih asks again

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By Hafiz Yatim

The indelible ink fiasco widely reported by the media and on the Internet yesterday has reinforced calls by Bersih for the Election Commission (EC) to hold a public demonstration on the procedure immediately.

Bersih co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan said the excuse given by the EC defies logic and is unacceptable.

NONE "I am incredulous that they would even proffer this as a reason. How is this acceptable when the whole purpose of indelible ink is that it cannot be removed? This is totally unacceptable.

"Now, this is more reason why a public demonstration must be held immediately to allay the fears in relation to its use on Sunday," said Ambiga in a text message to Malaysiakini.

Meanwhile, fellow steering committee member, Maria Chin Abdullah, said such reported incidents may have compromised the electoral and democratic processes.

Maria said the EC should be held responsible if there is a duplication of votes, for those who voted under the early voting process yesterday could be voting again on Sunday.

'EC statement an utter disappointment'

"Well, what can you say about the EC? It previously said the indelible ink is foolproof and can last for seven days.

"We are utterly disappointed with this development and the statement made by the EC secretary Kamaruddin Mohd Baria that its staff may not have 'shaken the bottles'.

"Such incidents further diminish our confidence in the EC and show the electoral process can be compromised. How can the EC do this to the people?" Maria asked.

Kamaruddin was reported by national news agency Bernama as saying that the EC ran some tests yesterday and as a result, fingers smeared with "ink from shaken bottles lasted longer than the others".

"Notwithstanding the impact of the indelible ink, the EC wants to emphasise that early voters who voted on April 30, 2013, cannot vote again on May 5 because their names do not exist in the electoral roll for ordinary voters." the EC secretary said in a statement last night.

NONEMaria (left) added the EC had claimed that its staff had been well-trained earlier this month and guaranteed that the ink would last at least seven days.

"These reinforce our demands for a public demonstration to allay such fears. I am wondering whether they (EC) are lying over the matter or they are incompetent," said the election rights group steering committee member.

She also urged the people to be on the lookout for suspicious security personnel who may attempt to vote again.

Those who want to lodge a complaint with Bersih can do so at at 03-7931-0840 or sms 013-771-1071 or email at jompantau@ komas.org.

Early voter lodges report

Meanwhile, an early voter in Johor, who did not want to be named, lodged a police report yesterday, stating that the indelible ink placed on her finger disappeared within hours.

She said that she cast her vote at an army camp in Johor about 8.30am, after which she went to town to pick up her children.

"After arriving home about noon, I did household chores, such as cooking, washing the dishes and clothes, and cleaning the house.

"At about 3.30pm, I noticed the indelible ink on the finger was gone. I informed this to a party candidate contesting there as I fear there would be manipulation," she says in her police report.

