

Bersih: We are not behind Bersih 4.0 rally

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By Hamzah Nazari, The Malay Mail

The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih 2.0) has denied claims that they are behind the proposed Bersih 4.0 rally.

NONE Bersih 2.0 steering committee member Wong Chin Huat (left) told The Malay Mail the coalition had no plans to organise the rally and would instead focus on setting up the people's tribunal to investigate alleged electoral fraud and irregularities during the recent general election.

"As far as Bersih (2.0) is concerned, this (Bersih 4.0) is a civil society movement and people can judge for themselves whether to attend or not," he said.

"Personally, I feel that democratisation requires people to think, judge, speak up and act by themselves rather than by just following a movement".

The group, however, did not condemn the rally which has been called by Pakatan Rakyat politicians, including PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu and PKR vice-president Tian Chua.

Mohamad had during a May 13 ceramah in Shah Alam said that PAS would organise the next Bersih rally and about a million people were expected to join the protest if the government did not implement electoral reforms.

Fellow committee member Maria Chin Abdullah said they had no issues with the next rally using the Bersih moniker.

"Bersih's name belongs to the people. It is not beholden to us," said Chin, pointing out that the committee identifies themselves as Bersih 2.0.

Attend rally at own merit

She said rallies were the right of the people, and it was guaranteed in the federal constitution.

Although the committee has no plans for such a rally, members might Bersih steering committee member Maria Chin Abdullah attend on their own merit.

"What is important is to clarify the purpose of the rallies. We held the previous

Bersih rallies for clean and fair elections, and it's clear this did not happen in the last election," she said.

On Bersih's citizens' election observation initiative (Pemantau), Chin (right) said they had gone through over 2,000 reports and had over 1,000 more to go, but were hopeful they would be done by early July.

Chin also said the people's tribunal was a separate effort from Pemantau but they might identify those who could give evidence based on reports and would later open the tribunal to members of the public who wish to provide information.

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