

Bersih 4.0 will go on, even without Ambiga

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Election reform pressure group Bersih is prepared to call another mass rally to ensure that the electoral roll is cleaned up, whether or not co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan is leading the group at the time.

On Saturday, it was reported that Ambiga would call for Bersih 4.0 if the electoral roll is not cleaned up and if the EC bulldozes through the proposed redelineation exercise.

She had earlier indicated her wish to step down from the leadership of the group, to make way for new blood.

Today, she told reporters at the Kuala Lumpur Court Complex that it is vital for the electoral roll to be cleaned up, or Malaysians will have to live with a dubious roll for the next two general elections.

She said a clean electoral roll is necessary before the intended redelineation exercise takes place, and that Bersih will go on a nationwide tour to explain the significance of this.

"I know the Election Commission (EC) deputy chairperson (Wan Ahmad Wan Omar, right) has said today that the cleaning up of the electoral roll has begun, along with the redelineation exercise," she said.

"However, this is insufficient as the cleaning up is only done when someone points it out to them. We want a thorough clean-up which also involves the participation of civil society and international groups like the United Nations."

The UN, she said, had helped clean up the Bangladesh electoral roll, and the same can be done in Malaysia. The updated Bangladesh version comprised the name and photo of genuine voters.

'EC must go to the ground'

Ambiga also said the RCI's proposal for re-registration of voters should be welcomed as part of efforts to clean up the electoral roll and eliminate 'phantom' voters.

"A census-type roll is needed, where the EC goes to the ground and does the cleaning up," she added.

"It is not enough that the EC sits in the office and clean ups the roll. I say enough is enough as we need a clean electoral roll now."

NONEBersih steering committee member and lawyer Andrew Khoo (left) questioned why the EC is rushing into the redelineation exercise, without waiting for the royal commission of inquiry to present its findings on illegal immigrants in Sabah.

"The federal constitution says that redelineation cannot be done (within) eight years from the last one, but does not tell you the upper limits. It does not mean that every eight years there should be immediately be (such an exercise)," he pointed out.

Khoo said the EC had stated that it would begin the exercise in October, but that two people were appointed last month to look into this under Article 116 of the federal constitution.

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