

Bersih slams PKR for betraying voters' trust

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Kajang elected representative Lee Chin Cheh's decision to step down and force a by-election in his Selangor state constituency is "nothing short of a betrayal of trust" given to him by voters, said electoral reform NGO Bersih 2.0.

In a hard-hitting statement, Bersih compared Lee's action with that of former DAP Jelapang representative Hee Yit Foong, whose resignation from the DAP triggered the Perak constitutional crisis.

"Both actions are equally deplorable. It is disappointing that PKR, one of the victims of the 2009 Perak constitutional crisis, is the key player in this sorry saga," it said.

It said that gravity of Lee's "poor judgement", who claimed that his resignation was to "strengthen PKR", was compounded by the party in accepting his resignation and endorsing it by picking de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim to contest in the upcoming by-election.

"This reeks of dirty politics and should be condemned," it said, decrying the wastage of public funds in the by-election, which must be held within 60 days.

PKR deputy president Azmin Ali said that the resignation was a tactical ploy by PKR so as to build momentum for the Sarawak polls and the 14th general election, which could be called as early as 2016.

This was echoed by Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, while PKR Youth in supporting Anwar's candidacy, said this would pave the way for Anwar to replace Abdul Khalid as MB.

'Political spins'

The resignation comes as fissures widened between Abdul Khalid and Azmin, who is also Selangor PKR chief, with the by-election seen by critics as a way to resolve internal party feud.

Unconvinced, Bersih said that PKR's "political spinning" cannot hide the fact that Kajang voters' interests took a backseat in the debacle.

"This is a regressive step for democracy because it supports the mistaken notion in Malaysia that elections are about political parties and politicians rather than about the people," he said.

"The mandate given to an elected representative by the people is something that should not be taken for granted.

"It is disappointing that in the midst of this political merry-go-round, the people's interest, like many times before, is forgotten."

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