

**Ex-DPM Muhyiddin urges Maria's release**  
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Former deputy prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin joined the chorus of those urging the release of Bersih chairperson Maria Chin Abdullah from detention under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (Sosma) 2012.

"Clearly, Maria was detained because of her involvement in organising Bersih 5 which demanded free, fair and clean elections in Malaysia.

"The Bersih 5 rally was a political activity and not a violent activity that can threaten national security," he said in a statement.

Muhyiddin, who is Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia president, argued that polls reform movement Bersih has sought to strengthen the democratic system in Malaysia.

He said Maria's arrest and detention goes against Section 4(3) Sosma which stipulated that no individuals should be arrested simply because of their political beliefs or for taking part in political activities.

Muhyiddin added, that Section 4(12)(b) of the Act also specified that political beliefs or activity means any legal activity that includes "sending a message or advice" to any government body.

The ex-DPM said since Bersih 5 was an expression of legitimate democratic dissent, it is protected under Section 4(3) which makes Maria's detention untenable and illegal.

"On the principle of justice, the supremacy of the law and humanitarian concern, Maria Chin must be released immediately," said Muhyiddin.

Detained a day before the mammoth Nov 19 Bersih 5 rally, Maria has been kept in solitary confinement and may be incarcerated for up to 28 days under Sosma.

Her detention was ostensibly linked to Bersih being investigated for allegedly receiving funds from Open Society Foundations, which was founded by American billionaire George Soros.