

**Reform or face rallies, Bersih 2.0 warns EC**  
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To mark the third anniversary of a mega rally demanding electoral reforms, the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections has reincarnated itself as "Bersih 2.0".

Bersih (or 'clean' in English) was responsible for organising a rally on Nov 10, 2007 which saw tens of thousands yellow-clad protestors flooding Kuala Lumpur to accompany the movement's leaders in submitting a petition for electoral reforms to the King.

bersih 2 launching 101110 08This time round, Bersih 2.0 will headed entirely by civil society instead of politicians, but similarly warns that street protests are on the cards if diplomacy with the Election Commission collapses.

"We believe in dialogue but if diplomacy fails to bring reasonable change and no one is listening, I can assure you, we know what to do.

"We know where to go and make noise. We know how to do it loudly," warned former Bar Council president Ambiga Sreenevasan who now helms Bersih 2.0, during the its launch last night.

11 demands listed

During her speech, Ambiga listed down Bersih 2.0's 11 demands for electoral reforms, two of which are new:

1. Complete revision of the electoral roll.
2. Use of indelible ink in elections.
3. Reform of postal voting.
4. Free and fair media access for all contesting parties.
5. Minimum campaign period of 21 days.
6. Fair and professional constituency redelineation.
7. Automatic registration of all eligible voters.
8. Reduction of the voting age from 21 to 18 years old.
9. Reform in electoral financing rules to ensure transparency.
10. Administrative neutrality of all levels of governments.
11. Affirming the political right of all students of 18 years and above.

bersih 2 launching 101110 09This is the first time that the movement is demanding better scrutiny of elections financing and a reduction in the voting age.

Ambiga (left) pointed out that Malaysia is behind other countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan, Hong Kong and Timor Leste where the voting age is 18 and Indonesia has gone as low as 17.

She also revealed that Bersih 2.0 leadership had a "fruitful meeting" with the EC yesterday where they put forward all their demands.

The EC is looking into reforming postal votes and using technology to eliminate multiple voting, but is resistant to the idea of using indelible ink, said Ambiga.

## Leadership transition

She also claimed that the EC revealed that they had written to the media asking for fair reporting during elections and this came as a surprise to her.

"If that's the case, what is stopping the media from giving fair coverage? The media has to explain."

Other suggestions that were rejected by the EC were the proposal to have automatic voter registration and reduction of the voting age, Ambiga added.

Some 1,000 members of public, including leaders from political parties and civil society, attended the launch at the Petaling Jaya Civic Centre.

Bersih 2 launching 101110 03Bersih was established by opposition parties and civil society organisations in 2006 to pursue clean and fair elections.

However, the leadership decided to transform the coalition into a purely civil society movement without political involvement hence renaming it Bersih 2.0.

The launching ceremony saw PAS MP for Kuala Selangor Dzulkefly Ahmad, representing Bersih 1.0, passing a trolley of goods to Ambiga, symbolising the transition.

The coalition comprises 62 non-governmental organisations with Empower (Selangor Community Consciousness Society) and Hakam (National Human Rights Society) taking the lead role.

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