

**Bersih: EC insulting voters' intelligence**  
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"The 12th general election may be the dirtiest election ever in Malaysian history." MCPX

This is the stark sentiment shared by politicians and activists who were present at a press conference held by polls reform group Bersih in response to the last minute cancellation of the use of indelible ink by the Election Commission (EC).

Yesterday, the EC announced its decision to reverse its plan of introducing the indelible ink for this coming general election, citing public order and security issue.

abdul rashid ec chairman and indelible ink for election 010607In making the announcement yesterday, EC chairperson Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman said that the Federal Constitution gave Malaysians the right to vote and a black mark on the fingernail should not bar people from exercising this right.

The original plan by EC was to mark each voter in the finger before they are issued a ballot paper.

Abdul Rashid also said that certain quarters had purchased indelible ink from abroad with the intention of creating confusion and suspicion as to the status of voters.

The decision caused indignation from the opposition parties and civil societies alike as the reason to introduce the ink was to ensure a more transparent polling.

Speaking to the media today, Bersih steering committee member and Subang parliamentary seat candidate R Sivarasa said that it was ludicrous for the EC to toy with the speculation that voters would mark their fingers with ink on their own before coming to vote.

bersih pc on cancel of indelible ink 050308 pkr sivarasa rasiahSivarasa added that this claim by the EC was an insult to voters' intelligence.

He also said that despite the police reports that have been lodged regarding the purchase of indelible inks from abroad, EC could still use its power to implement the use of indelible ink.

Sivarasa questioned as to why the EC was not using its power to regulate the implementation of the ink, just as how it had implemented the new stamp duty rule on the last minute just before the nomination day.

"This shows that we can't conduct a proper election and this invites the conclusion that the EC is receiving orders from BN," Sivarasa said.

Also present at the press conference at PAS headquarters this afternoon were DAP leader Teresa Kok, PAS Youth secretary Ahmad Sabki Yusof, lawyer-blogger Haris Ibrahim, Suaram executive director Yap Swee Seng and Pusat Komunikasi Masyarakat director Jerald Joseph.

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Meanwhile, Kok, who is contesting in the polls to retain her Seputeh seat, said the ink fiasco indicated that the EC was not independent. She also accused the commission of colluding with the BN.

Kok added that the reversal decision could be due to the fact that the opposition parties were receiving overwhelming responses from the public during the campaigning period.

bersih pc on cancel of indelible ink 050308 suaram yap swee sengSuaram executive director Yap Swee Seng said that although it was not required for the EC to amend the constitutional Federal Constitution to regulate the new measure, the EC nevertheless had all the time last year to call for an amendment.

"Constitutional amendment is a serious process. This shows a lack of political will in this country," Yap said.

Yap also challenged the EC and the police to show evidence of ink smuggling as claimed by the EC and to charge any wrongdoers immediately.

Meanwhile PAS Youth secretary Ahmad Subki Yusof said the cancellation of indelible ink proved that the EC was opening its door for phantom voters to make their move during the general election.

Ahmad alleged that it was clear that the EC and the BN were planning on a major scam to deploy phantom voters.

bersih pc on cancel of indelible ink 050308 komas jerald josephKomas director Jerald Joseph said free and fair election was a hallmark of functioning democracy and the upcoming general election was the chance for Malaysians to improve the current state of democracy in the country.

"We have a functioning police force, so I don't understand why the use of indelible ink will create confusion and cause chaos in the country," he said.

Joseph added, by cancelling the measures, it will create more confusion to the voters because EC has issues many statements before that the indelible ink will be implemented on polling day.