

Students Must Not Be Punished For Supporting Free & Fair Elections
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By Bersih 2.0

BERSIH 2.0 wishes to reiterate its full support for the nine Malaysian students in Egypt who had their scholarships suddenly & unceremoniously revoked by the Terengganu state government while they were in the midst of their studies abroad. The reason cited for the revocation was their participation in the BERSIH 2.0 peaceful assembly on the 9 July in Egypt last year.

We also fully understand the difficult situation experienced by one of the students, Muhamad Hasyim Che Ngah, who decided to meet with the Menteri Besar of Terengganu on Wednesday to appeal for his scholarship to be reinstated. BERSIH 2.0 fully respects Muhamad Hasyim's decision to appeal. At the same time, BERSIH 2.0 firmly maintains our support for the brave students who participated in the peaceful public assembly in Egypt, calling for free and fair elections in Malaysia.

In March, BERSIH 2.0 strongly condemned the move by the Terengganu government through Yayasan Terengganu as it is not only oppressive, but also violates the rights of the students to assemble peacefully, as enshrined under the Federal Constitution. In so doing, the Terengganu government has denied the students' right to education, which is also enshrined for all citizens.

The Yayasan Terengganu student loans were given on academic grounds and should only be revoked on the same basis. More importantly, such a decision contradicts the Prime Minister's slew of promises that the government would, at long last, liberalise its stand in relation to public assemblies.

BERSIH 2.0 wishes to reassure all of these students that they are not alone. We stand by all of those who chose not to appeal as well as with Muhamad Hasyim and hope for a just course of action from the state. As before, we unreservedly offer our assistance in securing legal help and are prepared to take steps to raise funds to assist the students as best as we can.

Further, BERSIH 2.0 calls on other state governments to lend their assistance to these students and their families. Not only has the Terengganu state government needlessly and baselessly punished these students, they have also punished their families. We believe many Malaysians stand ready to help and we once again call on them to do so.