

Anwar names Pakatan reps to electoral reform panel
The Malaysian Insider
October 03, 2011
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 3 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today named the opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR) pact's three representatives in the parliamentary select committee (PSC) for electoral reform but questioned the prime minister's sincerity in having clean and fair elections.

PM Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced the setting up of a nine-man panel to look into the electoral system and make it better last August, following widespread criticism against his government's handling of the July 9 Bersih 2.0 rally in the capital city.

"If Datuk Seri Najib is serious in cleaning up the election commission, he should say: 'I am committed and we will defend free and fair principles of the Election Commission.' However, this is not clear," Anwar told reporters today at the first sitting of the Dewan Rakyat's new session.

"He did not make any categorical assurance that he will clean up the process prior to the elections and that is something very difficult for us to swallow," said the PKR de facto leader.

Anwar said the three-party opposition alliance decided on PKR deputy president Azmin Ali (Gombak MP), PAS treasurer Hatta Ramli (Kuala Krai) and DAP Youth chief Antony Loke (Rasah MP) as their representatives in the PSC.

The ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition named its men two weeks earlier, picking Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Dr Maximus Ongkili (Kota Marudu MP) to be the bipartisan PSC's chief.

The BN's four other representatives are Kapit MP Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi, Kangar MP Datuk Seri Mohd Radzi Sheikh Ahmad, Alor Gajah MP Tan Sri Dr Fong Chan Onn and Hulu Selangor MP P. Kamalanathan.

An independent MP to complete the panel has yet to be named.

Tens of thousands took to the streets to support Bersih's rally for clean and fair elections in defiance of warnings of police action, which eventually resulted in nearly 1,700 arrests, scores injured and one ex-soldier dead.

The government crackdown led to international criticism and a group of Malaysians even held a protest when Najib visited London, a rare experience for any Malaysian prime minister abroad.

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