

Poll reforms panel to weigh barcode on ballots
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 9 — A suggestion for ballot papers to feature barcoding instead of serialisation will be explored by the Parliamentary Select Committee for poll reforms, Bernama Online reported today.

“If there is an extra ballot paper, you have to trace where it comes from. And the only way to trace is to see where that extra code comes from,” panel chief Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili was quoted as saying in the report.

“Without a barcode, it is hard for you to say where it comes from and so forth,” he added.

The suggestion for barcoding was previously shot down by the Election Commission’s No. 2, Datuk Wan Ahmad Wan Omar, who said serialisation was better able to protect voter anonymity.

The select committee on electoral reforms was a response by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to the July 9 Bersih 2.0 rally that saw tens of thousands pour into the streets of Kuala Lumpur to call for free and fair elections.

Among others, the panel also adopted the eight demands made by Bersih as part of its study on electoral reforms.

However, Bersih said last month that only one of its demands — the use of indelible ink — was met by the committee on electoral improvements and repeated its call for all eight to be implemented before federal polls expected early this year.

Opposition parties have warned of another mass rally after the prime minister refused to promise that the general election will only be held after the panel has fulfilled its six-month term.

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