

Don't prejudge BN-heavy polls reform panel, DPM tells Pakatan
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 — The deputy prime minister has asked the opposition not to prejudge the parliamentary select committee on electoral reform, which will mainly consist of lawmakers from the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the select committee should instead be seen by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) as a sincere attempt by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to allow all parties to debate the current system.

"The opposition should see this as a good initiative. There should be no suspicion or prejudice," he told reporters after speaking at the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) College here today.

Najib said on Monday that a bi-partisan parliamentary select committee will be formed "as soon as possible" to examine the current electoral system, a key demand of Bersih.

His announcement was seen as a major concession acknowledging the political fallout from his administration's harsh clampdown on the rally for free and fair elections that brought the capital to a standstill last month.

De facto law minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz added that he was "hopeful" that the motion to form the select committee will be tabled in Parliament when it next sits in October.

But the opposition has criticised the proposed composition of the committee, which will be headed by a minister and comprise five lawmakers from BN, three from PR and one independent MP.

PR has also demanded that Najib allow the opposition to head the committee as a show of good faith.

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