

PM pledges to look into PSC reforms
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, April 4 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak gave his assurance today that all 22 electoral reform recommendations made by the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) will be looked into, insisting his government wants a clean and fair election as well.

But the prime minister appeared non-committal when responding to Bersih 2.0's latest rally plan, only saying, "Tengoklah, nanti" (wait and see), as quoted by Bernama.

According to Bernama, Najib appeared surprised that Pakatan Rakyat had raised an uproar in Parliament yesterday. — file pic

The national news agency also reported Najib as telling Malaysian journalists in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, that the Barisan Nasional (BN) administration does not want to be elected into power through fraudulent methods.

"We have nothing to hide," he was quoted as saying after attending the two-day 20th Asean Summit at the Peace Palace.

According to Bernama, the prime minister appeared surprised that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) had raised an uproar in Parliament yesterday when the PSC's 22-point report was tabled, noting that members from the opposition pact were also a part of the panel.

Najib pointed out that the PR members had accepted the report with few objections before it was finalised and presented to the House.

The PSC's report was approved in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday without debate after PR lawmakers refused to accept Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia's decision to reject the inclusion of a "minority report" along with the panel's findings.

The "minority report" was to include the dissenting views raised by the panel's three PR members, who had rejected four of the 22 recommendations made.

We have nothing to hide. — Najib Razak

Apart from PR lawmakers, the PSC's final report has also been criticised by the Bar Council and election watchdog Bersih 2.0 as being overly simplistic and lacking in meaningful reform suggestions.

The groups have complained that the panel failed to touch on specific instances of manipulation in the current electoral roll, as well as methods on how to stop dirty politics and offences committed when polls are conducted.

Earlier today, Bersih 2.0 confirmed April 28 as the date of its third rally for free and fair elections, expressing disappointment that despite much hype over the past six months, the PSC had not lived up to its expectations.

The coalition of 84 non-governmental organisations said "Bersih 3.0", to be held from 2pm to 4pm at Dataran Merdeka, will this time include simultaneous protests nationwide and across the globe.

Its last rally on July 9 last year, which earned the Najib administration much criticism in the international media, had led to the PSC's formation, as well as the enactment of the Peaceful Assembly Act 2011, a legislation to regulate public gatherings.

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