

Bersih 2.0 demands election commissioners resign
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By Anisah Shukry

KUALA LUMPUR, April 12 — All election commissioners must resign immediately as they have compromised the integrity of the electoral roll by allowing fraud to continue unabated, Bersih 2.0 said today.

The election watchdog cited the failure of the Election Commission to report deaths on the electoral rolls in Sabak Bernam, Sungai Besar, Hulu Selangor and Tanjong Karang in the last quarter of 2011 despite the issuance of death certificates, as proof that fraud still continues.

Bersih 2.0 also pointed out other problems identified by the Malaysian Electoral Roll Analysis Project, such as double registration for 15,520 voters in Sabah and 8,585 in Sarawak, inconsistencies in gender, and addresses with more than 15 registered voters.

"It shows clearly that the Election Commission has failed in its constitutional duty to ensure a clean and fair election," Datuk A. Samad Said told reporters at the Kuala Lumpur Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall here today.

The Bersih 2.0 co-chairman added that the EC's refusal to recognise the legitimacy of overseas voters showed its insincerity in carrying out electoral reforms.

"To allow the present election commissioners to continue in their office will only bring about a dirty, unfair and undemocratic general election," he said.

"Bersih 2.0 calls upon the election commissioners to resign with immediate effect so that they can be replaced with others who will act to ensure a clean free and fair election in [the] future."

Bersih plans to hold a "sit-in" rally for free and fair elections on April 28 at Dataran Merdeka over what it says are inadequate measures mooted in the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) for electoral reforms.

Thousands thronged to the capital here in support of the group's previous rally for free and fair elections on July 9 last year despite a police lockdown of the city.

The peaceful rally turned chaotic after the authorities who deployed large teams of riot police armed with tear gas and water cannons to disperse protestors.

Eager to avoid the political fallout that accompanied last year's crackdown, the Najib administration has given the green light to Bersih 3.0 but want its organisers to negotiate with the police on a suitable location.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said earlier this week that the "sit-in" rally for free and fair elections, scheduled for this April 28 at Dataran Merdeka here, is not considered a "security issue".

"The government does not see plans for Bersih 3.0 as a security issue and we are allowing them to have it," he said.

But he stressed that in accordance with the spirit of the just-passed Peaceful Assembly Act 2011, specific locations could not be used for such rallies.

Under the Act, gatherings may also be held anywhere outside a 50m radius of a prohibited place as long as police are given 10 days' advance notice.

The list of prohibited places includes dams, reservoirs, water catchment areas, water treatment plants, electricity generating stations, petrol stations, hospitals, fire stations, airports, railways, land public transport terminals, ports, canals, docks, wharves, piers, bridges, marinas, places of worship and kindergartens and schools.

St Mary's Cathedral is just under 50m north of Dataran Merdeka, across Jalan Raja.

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