

**BN, Pakatan conclude PSC meeting in disagreement**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 28 — Parliament's select committee (PSC) for electoral reforms concluded its final meeting today with members across the political divide deadlocked on key issues like the alleged manipulation of the electoral roll.

After a five-hour long meeting, committee members finally emerged with a 22-point report, about seven of which they had to "agree to disagree" upon.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, one PSC member told reporters that the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) members in the committee had pressed for the inclusion of a "minority report" to be tabled along with the panel's final report next Monday.

But this was rejected, according to the source.

The source revealed that although most of the issues presented in the report received unanimous support from both PR and Barisan Nasional (BN) members, the points that saw disagreement were "key reform issues" that civil society groups and the opposition have been pushing for.

"The number (of points disagreed on) is smaller than those we agreed but those issues are fundamental... cleaning the electoral roll, postal votes for media," the source said.

The source pointed out that PR had wanted to scrap the postal voting system and allow army and police personnel to cast ballots via "advanced voting" instead.

But instead, added the source, it was recommended that postal voting be expanded to include media personnel.

"What is the definition of media? It could be bloggers who are friendly to BN's side," the source said.

Additionally, said the source, the Election Commission (EC) had also increased its number of officers on duty during polling day from 140,000 to 240,000, all of whom would be allowed to vote via post.

The source also repeated frustrations repeatedly voiced by PR over the EC's alleged lack of commitment to eliminate discrepancies from the electoral roll, such as the existence of voters sharing similar MyKad numbers.

"So we wanted to put a minority report so we can address these issues... let us debate it in Parliament.

"But it was rejected. We are disappointed because a majority of members, who are from BN or independent, rejected it, even though the minority report is not against any provisions in meeting rules," said the source.

However, the source said the committee agreed to record PR's objections in the early portion of the report.

Speaking to reporters at a press conference after the meeting, PSC chairman Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili admitted that several points in the report were disagreed on and members had to "agree to disagree".

"I admit that in terms of the final report, there were matters we agreed on unanimously and there were issues we agreed to disagree," he said.

In total, the PSC, formed last year following strong objections to the country's election process, held 14 meetings, six public hearings, perused several memorandums and organised one working trip abroad to study other election systems during its five-month-25-day tenure.

Its final report will be tabled in Parliament next Monday and is expected to be debated on the following day.

Thousands of people thronged the streets of the capital last July 9 for Bersih 2.0's rally for free and fair elections despite the widespread clampdown by the Najib administration before the tumultuous event was held.

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