

**Pakatan declares polls reform panel a failure**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 2 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) representatives in the government-mooted parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reforms complained today the panel had failed to meet its objectives, despite six months of heated discussions and at least six public hearings.

The members, Azmin Ali (PKR-Gombak), Hatta Ramli (PAS-Kuala Krai) and Anthony Loke (DAP-Rasah), told a press conference here that the bipartisan panel had fallen short of expectations as it had completely neglected to address “fundamental issues” surrounding concerns over the country’s election system.

Key among these, said Azmin (picture), was the call to clean up the current voter registry, which civil society groups and PR leaders have alleged are fraught with discrepancies.

The trio said today they have filed a motion notice with the Dewan Rakyat Speaker’s office under Standing Order 30(1) calling for amendments to be made to the PSC’s final report.

“This is so the Speaker can take note of our intention to amend the motion to be tabled on the PSC report, to attach a minority report to it,” Azmin said.

When asked about PR’s next plan of action should its motion be rejected, Azmin declined to comment, expressing confidence that Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia would give fair consideration to the proposal.

“Because this is an important motion... I am confident the Speaker will give a positive response.

“So we can debate this motion before the PSC report is tabled,” said Hatta.

The PSC’s 22-point report, which comprises its final recommendations for electoral reforms in Malaysia, was distributed to all members of the House today but it has been placed under strict embargo until 11.30am tomorrow when it is tabled for debate.

The nine-member committee had sat for its final meeting last Wednesday but ended a five-hour discussion in disagreement when those across the political divide were forced to “agree to disagree” on several key issues.

Bersih 2.0 recently warned of a possible “Bersih 3.0 rally” should the Najib administration fail to implement meaningful reforms to the country’s electoral process. — file pic  
“What we are disappointed about is that on March 28, the panel held its final meeting to finalise its recommendations in the final report but it did not take into account the views of our members to include a minority report that will give a more detailed explanation of the fundamental issues involving the electoral roll, which the Election Commission (EC) has yet

to clean," said Azmin.

He reiterated that the panel's members from PR had already presented much documented evidence showing discrepancies in the voter registry, which the EC has yet to address.

"We, on behalf of PR, were a part of the committee, we tried our level best to push for total reform in the electoral process.

"Unfortunately, this committee has failed to look at the entire proposal by civil society and individuals in preparing the final report... yes, they addressed some issues but they are not among the fundamental issues," he said.

Apart from electoral roll discrepancies, disgruntled PSC sources had last week also railed against the panel's failure to address other key requests for reforms such as the scrapping of the postal voting system, ensuring free and fair access to the media and an extension of the election campaign period to up to 21 days.

These requests were among those proposed to the government by election watchdog Bersih 2.0, which last year organised a mammoth rally on the capital's streets to demand free and fair polls.

The PSC was mooted shortly after the chaotic rally, which saw over a thousand arrests and even one death, when the Najib administration earned widespread criticism in the foreign media for its allegedly high-handed approach when cracking down on the event.

Bersih 2.0 recently warned of a possible "Bersih 3.0 rally" should the administration fail to implement meaningful reforms to the country's electoral process before the 13th general election is called. PR lawmakers have voiced their support for such an event.

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