

**Rush to streets shows Pakatan not serious about poll reforms, says BN**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 4 — Barisan Nasional (BN) MPs accused the federal opposition today of showing a lack of commitment to electoral reforms, saying Pakatan Rakyat (PR) had always wanted a third Bersih rally to score political points.

Lawmakers from the ruling coalition told reporters today the opposition should give the government and Election Commission (EC) a chance to implement recommendations by the parliamentary select committee on electoral improvements.

“We gave them a chance to participate in the select committee, we had public hearings but now they don’t want to give a chance for the recommendations to be carried out,” Umno information chief Datuk Ahmad Maslan said.

MIC’s P. Kamalanathan also said yesterday’s fracas over PR’s insistence that a minority report be tabled along with the panel’s findings was a “last-minute tactic after realising the committee was successful.”

“Fact is the recommendations have deadlines. If after two months the EC has done nothing, then you can have Bersih. But to do it now, they are showing they have never been serious about reforms,” said the Hulu Selangor MP, who sat on the polls panel.

Opposition lawmakers had said today they would support a third rally for free and fair elections by Bersih after accusing the ruling BN of not showing full commitment to electoral reforms.

They told The Malaysian Insider that after the findings of Parliament’s polls panel were passed yesterday without debate and a minority report dismissed outright, they would have to raise further public awareness of alleged electoral fraud.

Bersih confirmed today it will hold its third rally for free and fair elections on April 28 saying it was necessary to warn Malaysians that the country is about to face its “dirtiest” polls to date.

The 84-member coalition expressed its disappointment in the parliamentary select committee on electoral reforms that was formed following the July 9, 2011 rally for free and fair elections which saw tens of thousands flood the streets of the capital.

But Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz told reporters in Parliament today the historic square, where the Malayan flag was hoisted for the first time after independence, is not a lawful gathering point under the recently passed Peaceful Assembly Act.

To do it now, they are showing they have never been serious about reforms. — P. Kamalanathan

"Dataran Merdeka has not been gazetted as an area for peaceful gatherings," the de facto law minister said.

Umno supreme council member Datuk Bung Mokhtar Radin also said today the opposition's tactic is to "attack the government from the streets" after BN lawmakers had supported all 22 recommendations by the bipartisan select committee.

The opposition also backed the July 9, 2011 Bersih march despite accusations from certain quarters that the demonstration was masterminded by PR.

Police fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse the crowds in chaotic scenes which saw over 1,500 arrested, scores injured and the death of an ex-soldier in a clampdown that earned condemnation for the Najib administration in the international press.

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