

**Bersih 2.0 is legal, judge rules**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 24 — Bersih 2.0 has been declared legal after the Kuala Lumpur High Court today quashed the home minister's order last year that made the electoral reform group unlawful.

In her ruling today, High Court judge Datuk Rohana Yusof said the coalition of civil societies known as Bersih 2.0, though not officially registered, can be considered a society under the Societies Act.

"The minister's order is quashed because Bersih is a lawful society," Rohana said.

Prominent lawyer and former Malaysian Bar president Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan (picture) and 13 of her colleagues in Bersih's steering committee had in July last year filed a judicial review seeking to get the Barisan Nasional (BN) government to lift its July 1, 2011 ban of the movement.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein had declared the movement unlawful, citing section 5 of the Societies Act 1966 as investigations had shown that Bersih 2.0 was not a registered organisation and that it was creating unease among the people.

The loose coalition of 62 registered civil societies led tens of thousands to demand for free and fair elections in the capital city on July 9 last year, which resulted in some 1,600 arrests but ultimately resulted in the government agreeing to set up a bipartisan parliamentary polls panel.

Bersih 2.0 also want the court to issue a restriction order against the authorities to stop government officers from entering and raiding its premises and to return all the Bersih 2.0 property and materials seized last September, ranging from the yellow T-shirts, posters, placards, pictures, members' list.

Apart from Ambiga, the 13 other leaders named in the court filing are Maria Chin Abdullah, Datuk Toh Kin Woon, Zaid Kamaruddin, Dr Ahmad Farouk Musa, Arul Prakkash Sinnappan, Haris Fathillah Mohamed Ibrahim, Andrew Khoo Chin Hock, Liau Kok Fah, Wong Chin Huat, Datuk Yeoh Yong Poh and Yeo Yong Woi.

The group has since held another rally on April 28 this year to push for electoral reforms to be enforced before the 13th general election due soon.

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