

**Rafizi says Pakatan to press for EC reform 'in court, in the streets, in Parliament'**  
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**By Opalyn Mok**

GEORGE TOWN, May 17 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) will continue to pressure the government for the Election Commission (EC) to be completely reformed if Malaysia wants to see a clean election the next time around, said PKR director of strategy Rafizi Ramli.

Speaking at a forum on the facts behind PR's win in popular votes for Election 2013 here last night, Rafizi (picture) said the only way was to continuously fight and apply pressure so that the EC will be completely overhauled and replaced with people who are fair and who believe in clean elections.

"We need the whole EC to be completely reformed, where the chairman down to all its officers are replaced by new officers that are approved by PR and the public to ensure their impartiality," he said.

He said it was only after the EC was fully reformed that re-elections be held for seats that are proven to have irregularities and fraud, especially the 30 marginal seats.

He told the audience of several hundreds at Komtar that PKR has already assembled a team to probe electoral fraud into several parliamentary and state seats and once enough evidence was gathered, election petitions would be filed.

"We have been told that to file a petition, it would cost up to RM50,000 for each petition per seat and that means the 27 seats we are currently investigating could cost us close to RM1.5 million if we were to file petitions," he said.

He said this was why the party has to conduct thorough investigations and scrutinise all irregularities on top of gathering enough resources to file the petitions.

"We must continue to fight, whether it is in court, in the streets or in Parliament to push for a complete reform of the EC or else Barisan Nasional (BN) will continue to cheat to win," the Pandan MP said.

During a question-and-answer session, some in the audience asked what the PR could do about the alleged gerrymandering that would result in BN continuing to win in all future elections.

DAP election strategist Dr Ong Kian Ming, who was also one of the forum panellists, said the only way was to continue to fight for EC reform to ensure that the redelineation exercise, expected to start by this year, would be done fairly and would not be another gerrymandering attempt.

He said other methods to fight this would be to continue to register more voters and also in other areas, including a Bersih 4.0 rally, for total reform of the EC.

Earlier, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, who opened the forum, criticised newly appointed Home Minister Datuk Zahid Hamidi for going overboard by asking unhappy Malaysians to leave the country.

"If this is the standard that he is going by, does it mean that all the BN supporters in Penang must move to other states?" he asked.

Besides, Rafizi and Ong, PAS's Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad was the other panellist at the forum which was moderated by Lim's political secretary Zairil Khir Johari.

All three panellists gave figures and spoke on how PR had essentially won the May 5 polls by garnering 51 per cent of the popular votes.

EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof was invited to the forum but he did not turn up for the 2½-hour event that ended around 11pm.

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