

Pakatan seeks 500,000 volunteers for anti-EC action
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By Ida Lim

PETALING JAYA, May 26 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) wants to sign up some 500,000 volunteers to protest at the Election Commission (EC) offices until the members resign in favour of replacements who report directly to parliament.

The coalition also wants voters to lodge reports against the EC for using indelible ink that can be washed off immediately after the May 5 general elections, despite claims that it was introduced to prevent possible double voting.

“The people will move to SPR until SPR is dibubarkan (disbanded). Can?” losing PKR candidate Badrul Hisham Shaharin asked thousands who crowded a rally here organised by 60 NGOs, referring to the EC by its initials in the Malay language.

Emceeding the rally to protest alleged electoral fraud at the Dataran Petaling Jaya in Jalan Timur, Badrul led the crowd in chants of “SPR letak jawatan” (EC resign), singling out EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof and deputy Datuk Wan Ahmad Wan Omar.

PR has blamed alleged electoral fraud for not becoming government although it won the popular vote in Election 2013. It won 89 federal seats against the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) which took 133 seats in the 222-seat parliament.

The politician better known as CheguBard heads Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia (SAMM), which is demanding that the EC should not be under the Prime Minister’s Department but should report to parliament.

A man holds a sign at the rally. — Picture by Saw Siow Feng

Opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was the last to address the rally but he also rejected the idea of working with the EC and supported calls that the current EC members resign immediately.

“We will never cooperate or work or engage with such a deceitful Election Commission,” the PKR de facto chief said, adding that an “ultimatum” will be issued if they do not resign.

Anwar urged the public to lodge police reports if they had experienced the alleged premature washing-off of the indelible ink from their fingers on voting day.

He said they should do so from tomorrow onwards up until Monday and send copies of the reports to PR.

“This is to show the power and might of the people. We challenge you according to due process. We also respect the rule of law,” said Anwar.

He said that PR wanted to present a large barrel of the people’s police reports of EC’s alleged fraud in the courtroom.

PR is looking to file election petitions to contest polls’ conduct and results of more than 25 federal seats, a move, which must be done within 21 days from the gazette of the polls

results on May 22.

Nurul Izzah Anwar urged PR supporters not to hate political rivals BN. — Picture by Saw Siow Feng

Anwar also called for Malaysians to support Bersih's efforts through the polls watchdog's People's Tribunal, a new initiative which will be used to examine public complaints of alleged electoral fraud.

Despite the EC saying that the People's Tribunal lacks legal standing, Anwar said he viewed it as having legitimacy.

Nurul Izzah Anwar, the daughter of the Opposition Leader, similarly accused the EC of cheating, highlighting the failure of the indelible ink which was introduced to prevent double voting.

"We'll fight them hard especially to ensure that no unfair re-delineation takes place," the PKR vice-president told the crowd, referring to the re-delineation exercise by the EC that is expected to take place by year-end.

The Lembah Pantai MP also took a slightly different tack when she urged PR supporters not to hate political rivals BN.

"They might want us to hate them. I will tell you the only thing you should feel against Umno, Barisan Nasional and its leaders is pity. Don't have to hate and it's because we love Malaysia, we love the future," she said.

"Never, never lower yourself to their level. We fight with love, we fight with peace. We fight because we are better than these people," she later stressed.

The "Himpunan SuaraRakyat505" went ahead peacefully. — Picture by Saw Siow Feng

Earlier she said that people should leave the ethnic-based parties in BN, naming Umno, MIC and MCA, which she claimed were "racist".

She called on the people to go to Putrajaya and press the home minister for a licence to replace local daily Utusan Malaysia with Utusan Rakyat.

"You give us our permit and we make sure we create news that are true for the people, not news to plant feelings of hate," she said.

The crowd at the rally streamed in from 5pm and reached its peak about 9pm with a traffic jam reported at the nearby Federal Highway. The NGO-organised affair appeared to be a continuation of a Pakatan Rakyat (PR) campaign that began two weeks ago.

Despite police remarks that the gathering known as "Himpunan SuaraRakyat505" was illegal, the crowd turned up clad in black to symbolise their protest and dispersed peacefully.

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