

Press Release from BERSIH

23 November 2021

Bersih 15th Anniversary: Upholding Beacon of Democracy in Malaysia

15 years ago on this date, the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH) was established with the objective of ensuring that the biggest field of democracy in Malaysia, namely elections are conducted in a clean and fair manner. This coalition was formed with the support of civil society organizations, political parties and who aspire to see a bright future for our country's democracy. After that is history. BERSIH has succeeded in instilling in Malaysians an understanding of the importance of democracy and this is reflected in the tens of thousands of Malaysians taking to the streets to demand clean and fair elections.

Through a series of BERSIH rallies, Malaysians have exposed the loopholes and weaknesses of the electoral system and demanded to reform our electoral system and democratic institutions. Against all odds, the people managed to change the government in May 2018 with Pakatan Harapan (PH) elected to govern the country.

PH was elected to bring about the reforms that the people have hoped for so that our country can recover but the recovery was too slow and eventually PH was overthrown through a political coup after 22 months in power. The work and expectations towards BERSIH are increasing to provide a narrative and solution to the political crisis, and BERSIH comes with policies proposals that need to be adopted by all political parties if they want better politics in the future.

At the BERSIH Steering Committee level, we believe that BERSIH's image and direction need to be rebranded with a new look. The BERSIH symbol was changed slightly to suit the spirit of the times and the word "2.0" was dropped. In 2010, "2.0" was added to differentiate BERSIH which was originally founded by politicians and civil society activists with BERSIH which is now taken over entirely by the civil society. We believe after 11 years, it is clear to all that BERSIH is an independent and non-partisan organization. BERSIH's goal remains the same to play a leading role in urging the country's key institutions to be improved and the stakes of democracy to be strengthened.

15 years after fighting on the streets and in consultation rooms to demand that electoral reform and institutional reform be important national agenda, it is still a long journey for BERSIH and all Malaysians. We seek support, guidance and encouragement from Malaysians to continue to lead this movement in the face of challenges and hopes in order to create a Malaysia that is fair, just, independent and upholds the dignity of the people.

Hidup hidup, hidup Rakyat! Bersih Bersih, Pilihan Raya!

Released by,

The Steering Committee of BERSIH