

Launch of BERSIH 2.0's Simulated Recall Election Campaign (SREL)

The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) launched **'Sack Or Keep?: A Simulated Recall Campaign'**

on 21 June 2021, a non-partisan campaign aimed to empower voters between general elections when their elected representatives party hop.

The Sheraton Move in February 2020 saw the collapse of the Federal government through defections by a group of MPs and the Bersatu party to form a new government with the Opposition then. The nine months that followed saw a collapse of six state governments, constant talks of counter-coups, snap elections, and back and forth switching in alliances by elected representatives and parties.

Bersih's focus post-Sheraton Move was to identify all these political weaknesses. We commissioned over 10 research papers that look at some of the good practices around the world and make recommendations to enact new laws or amend existing ones so that we can strengthen our parliamentary democracy.

A Recall Election law is one such law that we are advocating to be enacted to address the issue of party or coalition hopping. It is different from an Anti-Party Hopping Law (AHL) in that it is not a prohibitive law and a seat is not automatically declared vacated when an elected representative changes party allegiance or is sacked by the party. The freedom of the MP or ADUN to associate with a party of his choice or go independent is not violated in a recall election mechanism.

The Recall Election mechanism allows the voters of the constituency that elected the representatives the option to remove him or her in-between General Elections if they disapprove of the action of the person. This would truly empower voters to hold their elected representatives accountable throughout their term instead of waiting every five years to vote.

Bersih has issued many statements, commissioned a paper, engaged with politicians and other stakeholders on recall elections. Now we are launching this **Sack or Keep Campaign** to engage with the Malaysian public and to educate them about a mechanism that can restore power to them and in the process, hopefully, restore hope to our political system.

The impetus for Bersih to initiate this campaign was the second wave of defections on the first anniversary of the Sheraton Move when Tebrau and Julau, then the Kuala Langat MPs defected. Bersih realised that there is a need for an avenue for voters to express their dissatisfaction and for them to send a message to their MPs.

With this **Sack or Keep Campaign**, Bersih acts as the Electoral Committee and offers to conduct a Simulated (Mock) Recall Election in constituencies with defected representatives. A minimum of 3% of registered voters is needed to sign the online petition for the simulated recall election to be carried out in their constituency. Once Bersih verifies that the 3% of votes online are by registered voters, the simulated recall election will be opened online. At least 10% of registered voters from that constituency will need to participate and there should be more Yes votes than No votes before the targeted elected rep could be considered recalled or sacked.

The e-voting system used in this campaign is a secure, robust and user-friendly application by Bersih's tech partner, ReGov Technologies. Voters will be able to trust the security of this system as much as they trust their e-banking system as there are security measures in place to ensure the validity of the votes while securing voters' privacy. A demonstration of this system by ReGov's representative was shown during the launch.

While the outcome of these simulated recall elections do not determine if renegade elected representatives are sacked or remain in their positions, it is a step in the direction of one day having recall elections enacted as a law in Malaysia. In the meantime, this simulated recall election provides voters a channel to have their voices and choices heard and makes clear to renegade elected representatives what their constituents want.

To find out more about the Pecat atau Kekal (Sack or Keep) campaign, please visit our dedicated site at www.recall.bersih.org . If you are interested to initiate a simulated recall election at your constituency, please e-mail

recall@ber

sih.org

Statement issued by:

The Steering Committee of Bersih 2.0

****You can also check our media kit: <https://bit.ly/3wKDT4X>**

BERSIH 2.0 Secretariat A-2-8, 8 Avenue Business Centre, Jalan Sungai Jernih 8/1, 46050 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia. Tel. No. : +603-76280371