

Press Release from BERSIH 2.0

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MAGERAN 2.0 Is Not Needed, Reconvene and Empower Parliament To Fight Covid-19 Collectively

The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) refers to a statement by Tun Mahathir Mohamad, Protem Chairperson of Pejuang Party (PEJUANG) who proposed to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong (YDPA) to set up a National Operations Council (MAGERAN) to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. We would like to state that MAGERAN 2.0 is a proposal that will cripple the role of Parliament as a platform for policy making. With the proclamation of the emergency, the role of this third branch of government already crippled when Parliament and the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) were not allowed to sit during this period.

The most suitable platform to discuss the way forward for Malaysia to emerge from the Covid-19 epidemic and its impact on the socio-economy of the people is to reconvene the parliament. In the current emergency period, all powers are centralized to the Executive and all actions and instructions from them cannot be checked effectively as there is no need for the Executive to answer questions raised by elected representatives.

BERSIH 2.0 previously issued several statements calling for the parliament to reconvene to restore its role of oversight mechanism of the Executive in dealing with Covid-19. The emergency proclamation did not succeed in lowering the daily Covid-19 cases resulting in the government announcing the Movement Control Order (MCO) 3.0, which further negatively impacted the national economy and the people. To repeat the same action by setting up MAGERAN 2.0 is regressive because once again power will be centralized to certain individuals without check and balance system and involving all parties.

MAGERAN 2.0 is redundant because what is important now is to end the emergency immediately so that the government and the opposition can play their roles. All government programs such as Program Immunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (PICK) and the committees involved, such as the Special Committee on Ensuring Access to Covid-19 Vaccine Supply (JKJAV) can be monitored and improved by the ideas emerging from parliamentary debate the PSCs.

BERSIH 2.0 calls on the Federal Government to immediately negotiate a confidence and supply agreement (CSA) with the opposition with the aim of fighting the pandemic collectively and to stabilize the nation's politics by making the necessary reforms and concessions. If the Perak State Government under Menteri Besar Datuk Saarani Mohamad can achieve cooperation with the opposition in Perak under the leadership of Datuk Dr. Abdul Aziz Bari, what is stopping Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yasin from discussing it with the Opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim?

CSA-style models in Perak such as equal constituency development fund, district action committees involving the opposition could be developed at the federal level by allowing parliamentary select committees to sit and check the government measures. The CSA should be announced publicly so that the people know what are the terms and reforms that have been agreed between the government and the opposition.

We can get out of this pandemic safely if all parties join hands and work together honestly and earnestly.

Released by,

The Steering Committee of BERSIH 2.0