

Press Release from BERSIH 2.0
BERSIH 2.0 Steering Committee

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Stop Using GLC As Political Tools, Reform GLC Appointment

1. The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) welcomes the news that both UMNO vice-president Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin and UMNO supreme council member Razlan Rafii are resigning as chairman of Boustead Holdings and board member of Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera (LTAT) respectively.

2. While the resignation of the two UMNO politicians may be an act of protest against the Perikatan Nasional (PN) government, we are afraid their protest will be futile as the vacancy that they left behind will be quickly used by the PN government to win over other potential supporters to hold on to power while being a minority government.

3. Positions of government linked corporations (GLCs) have long been used by the Government

of the day and most rampantly by Perikatan Nasional as political tools to consolidate their power and induce crossovers of elected representatives. This has had disastrous impacts on the stability of Malaysian politics with the collapsed of federal government and several state governments after the Sheraton move. Such abuse of GLCs and political patronage breeds corruption and cronyism, often at the expense of the effective functioning of the GLCs with appointments to GLC positions not based on merit, as in the case of former PRASARANA chairman Datuk Seri Tajuddin Abdul Rahman.

4. We call on the the Perikatan Nasional (PN) government to stop abusing GLC positions as bargaining chips to win political support and consolidate its power. The PN government must not use the position in Boustead and LTAT to fish for political support and fill the positions with their supporters again.

5. Instead, the PN government should introduce a GLC appointment law that will institute proper processes of appointment to GLC positions and ensure fairness, transparency and meritocracy. GLC appointments should be screened by bi-partisan Parliamentary Select Committees to ensure these appointments are based on merits and not partisan interest.

6. The new GLC law should also explicitly ban elected representatives, whether member of parliament or state assemblyperson, from being appointed to positions in GLCs to prevent conflict of interest between their role as lawmaker to provide oversight to the government that makes appointments to GLC. The law should also compel all GLCs to enhance disclosure and transparency through periodic reports that should include important information such as appointment of chairperson and directors, their remuneration etc.

7. We therefore implore UMNO and all other political parties to demand and support for such reform to GLC appointments in order to even the playing field in politics and take away the power of the incumbent government to abuse GLC as a political tool for manipulation. Such reform will also ensure GLCs are helmed by qualified, professional and competent candidates that will strive for excellence and work for public interest.

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