

MEDIA STATEMENT 24th April 2021

The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) expresses concern over the action taken by the government which stifling the people's freedom of speech with two separate incidents of activist arrests, namely the detention of seven activists in Kampung Muhibbahraya, Tawau, Sabah today, and the detention of Fahmi Reza on 23 April 2021.

The arrests of activists for two days in a row show that the government does not respect the Article 10 of the Federal Constitution which protects the people's right to freedom of speech. Ordinary people only have their voices to express their difficulties and demands which are increasingly suppressed by the day. The protests from the people to the point of going to the streets show that the situation is getting more desperate on the ground and the government needs to listen to their voices.

The arresting of protesters who criticise government policies is extremely outrageous and does not reflect a government that cares and carries the voices of the people as the backbone of the country's democracy.

Moreover, with the suspension of Parliament, the space to speak up in the country is increasingly being silenced by the government and this is indeed perilous to the democracy of

our country.

BERSIH 2.0 also condemns the police who allegedly assaulted one of the activists, Mukmin Nantang, in Kg Muhibbahraya, on the shoulder and chest. The act of beating up a detainee is an abuse of power and a human rights violation. Furthermore, the activists who were arrested did not act violently against the police.

BERSIH 2.0 once again calls upon on all Malaysians to continue to defend the freedom of speech, expression and assembly as the core of our country's democracy. BERSIH 2.0 also calls for the immediate release of the seven activists detained in Kampung Muhibbahraya without any conditions of legal action. BERSIH 2.0 welcomes the release of Fahmi Reza from remand and urges the police to drop the investigation on the activists who exercise their constitutionally-enshrined freedom.

Issued by:

BERSIH 2.0 Steering Committee

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