



JANUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER



Global Bersih (GB) wishes all its readers a wonderful Chinese New Year! Let us hope that this upcoming lunar year brings more prosperity, equality, freedom, fairness, and transparency.



Introducing the GB 2017 Executive and Steering Committee (SC) Members

On January 2, 2017 the 2016 GB Steering Committee had its Annual General Meeting. Prior to the meeting, requests were sent to the City Coordinators for volunteers to join the SC. Through this process, five new supporters joined the Committee during this meeting. They were:

- Daphne d'Herve from Paris, France

- Linda Yeoh from Lausanne, Switzerland
- Nirmala Devi Windgaetter from Cologne, Germany
- Greg Lopez from Perth, Australia
- Dennis Chandran from Busan, South Korea

The remaining members of the Committee who agreed to remain were Ivy Josiah (Kuala Lumpur), Colin Rajah (San Francisco), Yolanda Augustin (London), Charis Quay (Paris), Kevin Bathman (Sydney), Lydia Chai (Auckland), Kean Wong (Sydney), and Bala Chelliah (Geneva).

The Committee then held elections for its 2017 Executive Committee and appointed the following:

President: Bala Chelliah (Geneva)

Secretary: Nirmala Devi Windgaetter (Cologne)

Treasurer: Linda Yeoh (Lausanne)

We also thanked the outgoing Executive Committee members Colin (President) and Lydia (Treasurer) for their contribution to GB during 2015/2016, and also to SC member Chong Pin who stepped down for personal reasons, but will continue as an IT Support contributor.

The new SC has agreed to the following priorities for Global Bersih in 2017:

- Overseas Voting Proposal – to lobby the Election Commission to implement a robust overseas voting system ASAP, and definitely before the GE14 date is announced
- Upcoming GE14 – encourage as many as possible overseas Malaysians to register to vote
- Improve the image of GB and strengthen its brand name
- Fundraising – explore different types of fundraising possibilities and focus on those as dictated by our capacity

Global Bersih Gathering in Malaysia

On January 2, 2017, Global Bersih (represented by Colin, Bala, Ivy, Kean and Kevin) held a new year's lunch meeting in Kuala Lumpur with Bersih 2.0 (represented by Maria Chin, Jay Jay Denis and Mandeep Singh) and Global Bersih patron and former Bersih 2.0 Chair Ambiga Sreenevasan, to exchange ideas and discuss the future of the Bersih movement and Global Bersih.



While recognizing the challenges facing civil society in Malaysia, Ambiga encouraged the team not to lose hope and to continue the struggle bravely. Main outcome of the meeting was an agreement that GB should focus in 2017 on galvanizing overseas Malaysians to register and participate in GE14. Bersih Chairperson Maria Chin expressed her

appreciation of the solidarity and support shown by the GB cities for Bersih's demands and for the active participation in the Bersih 5 rally.

Overseas Voting Proposal - Introduction

This project is to focus on reforming the overseas voting system to enable all Malaysians living overseas to vote through a fair and efficient system. Before coming up with the proposal, GB collected information worldwide on the real possibilities to vote from overseas. The conclusion was that there was no consistent existing system on overseas registration or voting.

The Malaysian foreign missions overseas have been inconsistent on the possibility for Malaysians to register at the embassies.

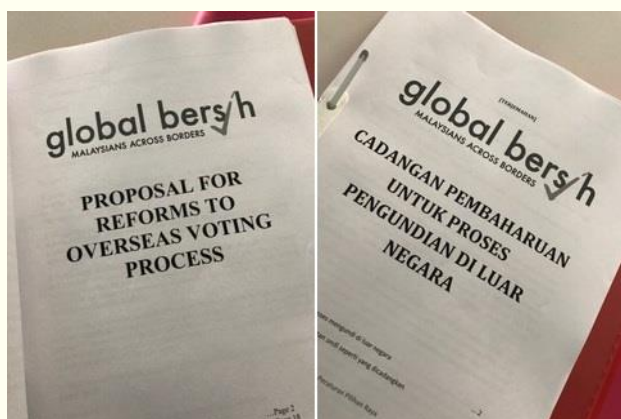
Global Bersih's Lydia Chai (who leads GB Auckland) together with the support of many other GB city coordinators, arrived at a proposal to reform the existing system to enable all Malaysians residing overseas to register and vote overseas through a fair and transparent system.

The salient points of the proposal were:

- The term 'overseas postal voting' should be renamed 'overseas advance voting' to correctly reflect the fact that voting would be done in person at foreign missions.
- Overseas advance voting should be implemented on an ongoing basis.
- Additional polling locations that are known as 'field polling centres' should be set up to facilitate overseas voting in areas where Malaysian embassies, consulates or high commissions are non-existent.
- Voter secrecy should be upheld through randomized issuing of ballots and avoiding records of voters' names alongside ballot serial numbers.

- More transparency and security are needed by allowing party agents ('overseas agents') who are elected by political party candidates or independent candidates, to wield the same authority and powers as their counterparts would at polling stations in Malaysia. These overseas agents should be allowed to monitor the receipt and opening of ballot sacks/boxes, to control the sealing of ballot bags/boxes and observe the counting of votes at the overseas polling locations.

Global Bersih has submitted the proposal to the EC in Malaysia and some city coordinators have submitted to their respective Malaysian foreign missions overseas. We are also planning to work together with other local and international NGOs, media, and all interested parties to bring this proposal forth. We will be updating you with the progress in the next newsletter. For more information check out our website or contact us.



Global Bersih Germany - Meeting with Amnesty International in Germany

The local chapter of GB in Germany had a meeting with the Amnesty International (AI) South Pacific Desk in Frankfurt to discuss the possibility of working together. Global Bersih secretary, Nirmala Devi Windgaetter met up with Andreas Fulda and his AI team in Frankfurt. Global Bersih updated the AI team on the current situation in Malaysia, and the role of GB in the global Malaysian diaspora.

Both parties agreed to keep each other informed about upcoming activities and the possibility of working together in the future.



Two Relevant Recent Articles

Check out [an article](#) by one of our Steering Committee members, Greg Lopez, on the possibility of a better system for Malaysia:



Bersih: Towards a better system in Malaysia? Part 1

"In its broadest conception, a 'system' may be described as a complex of interacting components together with the relationships among them that permit the identification of a boundary-maintaining entity or process."

- Laszlo & Krippner, 1998

History, geography and institutions have created a particular system in Malaysia. In my last article, I noted that this system had been found wanting by a majority of Malaysians.

But how do you reform a system — in a democratic, equitable, and peaceful manner?

There are many examples of reforms taking place in Malaysia.

The efforts by Idris Jala (former minister in the Prime Minister's Department, now CEO of PEMANDU and managing director of Big Fast Results Institute) to implement the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) and the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) are certainly the most visible.

The quiet effort by YB Senator Datuk Paul Low Seng Kuan who serves as a minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of Governance, Integrity and Human Rights to bring greater accountability and transparency to the system is also noteworthy...

For the rest of the story, click on [this link](#).

Kean Wong is a Malaysian journalist based in Sydney, Australia. He is also a member of GB Steering Committee. Check out a [recent podcast](#) with Kean Wong discussing the exposé on the use of Malaysians as illegal foreign workers in Australia's fresh fruit farms.

Bersih 2.0 Press Statement on Election Commission's Negative Image

On January 13, 2017, Bersih 2.0 issued a [press statement](#) on the allegations that the EC's negative image is due to public perception. According to Bersih 2.0, the negative image of EC is indeed a reality due to the five reasons listed below:

- Unconstitutional redelineation exercise
- Flawed and bloated electoral roll
- Inefficient and obsolete voter registration system

- Failure to check electoral corruption
- Failure to advocate "caretaker government code"

Global Bersih Geneva - Upcoming Workshops

Recognising the lack of experience in the complexities of international fundraising and appropriate communication methods and skills, GB Geneva is organizing two workshops for GB supporters.

Fundraising Workshop

Global Bersih is planning a fundraising workshop to:

- Provide members with basic knowledge and skills in writing funding proposals
- Provide a platform for members to start discussing how they can strategize long term fund raising strategies

By attending the workshop, participants will be able to take the lead or assist with GB's needs to intensify fund-raising activities. On a personal level, participants should be able to:

- Understand the objectives and processes involved in funding proposal writing
- Understand the definition and distinction of common jargons used in funding proposal
- Learn good practices on writing a funding proposal

The fundraising workshop will take place in Nyon, Geneva on February 26, 2017, and should take no longer than 3.5 hours.

There will also be a communications workshop planned for March/April 2017.

For more information, please contact the following person at GB:

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**“If you are neutral
in situations of
injustice, you
have chosen the
side of the
oppressor.”**

Desmond Tutu

Malaysia needs clean and fair elections

Support our crowdfunding campaign to raise funds for Global Bersih to affect change and protect the rights of all Malaysians.

global bersih
MALAYSIANS ACROSS BORDERS

