

For immediate release

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## **Malaysian government should stop violence of red shirts and ensure safety of Maria Chin, Ambiga Sreenevasan, and Mandeep Singh**

The Asia Democracy Network (ADN), urges the Malaysian government to take immediate and effective measures to stop the violent aggression and incitement of violence perpetrated by the red shirts and ensures the safety of Maria Chin, Ambiga Sreenivasan, and Mandeep Singh.

Maria Chin, the chairperson of Bersih 2.0, Ambiga Sreenevasan, president of the National Human Rights Society of Malaysia, and Mandeep Singh, staff of Bersih 2.0, received a death threat on October 18 via a whatsapp message sent to Maria Chin, with images of their face superimposed on a captive held by an IS-liked terrorist holding a knife over their shoulder. Two days later, the car of one of Maria Chin's children was splashed with red paint and chicken blood.

If Malaysia is to convince the international community that the rule of law still exists in the country, Prime Minister Najib Razak must unequivocally and openly condemn the death threats against the three and the violence committed by the red shirts against Bersih 2.0 supporters. His government must launch an effective investigation in order to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The Inspector General of Police must also investigate the statement of the incitement of violence and war by the red shirt leader, Jamal Md Yunus.

The death threats against the three and the splashing of red paint and chicken blood on the car of Maria's children came after a series of threats and physical attacks by the red shirts to the supporters of Bersih 2.0 that launched a nationwide convoy on October 1 to rally support for the November 19 demonstration in Kuala Lumpur.

On October 1, the red shirts were reportedly tailing the Bersih 5 convoy in Lumut, pulling flags from convoy vehicles, kicking the cars and punching the vehicles' side mirrors. In a second incident on the same day, Bersih's convoy was blocked by red -shirt thugs led by Jamal Md Yunus in Teluk Intan. Jamal Md Yunus, who is also a division leader of the ruling party UMNO, was alleged to have yanked a banner carried by three Bersih supporters and punched one of them. A few Bersih participants were hurt during the scuffle that ensued.

On October 8, two Bersih bikers were stopped and egged by red shirts led by Jamal Md Yunus at Sabak Bernam and one of the bikers, Kusaini Kassim was surrounded by red-shirt protesters and kicked twice in the head. Following this incident, three red-shirt supporters were arrested by the police.

On October 19, red shirt leader Jamal Md Yunus was arrested by the police upon return from abroad. He was released on bail the next day and immediately declared all out war against Bersih 2.0 after stepping out of the police station.

On October 28, Jamal Md Yunus threatened that he will mobilize 300,000 red shirts to stop the rally of Bersih 2.0 on November 19, "even if bathed in blood".

On October 29, Maria Chin was arrested by police for distributing leaflets in Langkon, Sabah and investigated under Section 11 of the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984, which requires every publication printed or published within Malaysia to bear the name and address of the printer and publisher.

“Such death threats against Maria Chin, Ambiga, and Mandeep are outrageous. It is even more shocking that the prime minister of Malaysia, Najib Razak, has been conspicuously quiet on the death threat incident to this day, giving rise to the concern that Jamal Md Yunus and his red shirts might have the political blessing from the prime minister”, said Anselmo Lee, Secretary General of Asia Democracy Network.

Under the new national security act empowering the government to declare martial law in areas that are seen as security threats, we express concern that these threats will be used as a pretext by the government to shut down the Bersih 5.0 rally. We urge the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association to investigate the situation and Malaysia’s actions in ensuring the protection of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

### **Asia Democracy Network**

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