

03 NOV 2002

Abdullah-EC

BN TO SUBMIT INFO ON 2.8 MILLION "TRANSFERRED" VOTERS

KLANG, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional (BN) will submit details on the 2.8 million voters, who had been transferred to other constituencies, to the Election Commission (EC) for action before the next general election, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

The deputy prime minister said the National Registration Department (NRD) would be asked to look at the electoral roll to ensure that they were genuinely eligible to vote in their respective constituencies.

"We (BN) cannot (on our own) make rectifications to this as it is a very important issue. We hope the EC will assist in cleaning up the roll," he told reporters after launching the Skoda car here.

He said the government wanted to ensure that the voters were genuine residents of the respective constituencies and not those who had nothing to do with these areas.

Abdullah said this when asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that some 2.8 million voters were found to have their names transferred to other constituencies and that this had been going on for the past 30 years.

He said these individuals were non-residents of the villages or constituencies but were outsiders registered at a particular address and this had been done with an ulterior motive.

"If they want to vote, (then) do it at their village, place of birth or employment. Otherwise it can cast suspicions on the integrity of the electoral roll and the voters themselves," he said.

Asked on the reaction of the Malays towards the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English from next year, he said the move would not affect the national schools or the Malays themselves.

"Initially, there may be some concern but in this modern era the children are more responsive to education as they are more active in terms of thinking apart from receiving lots of stimulus to learn," he said.

He said the stimulus now was much better than that during their parents' and grandparents' time and the children now were in an environment which enabled them to learn and understand fast.

Abdullah said the present education system was one which provided knowledge in all fields, developed the people and enabled them to contribute to the religion, race and nation.

Improving teaching and professionalism and providing quality teachers and sufficient learning opportunities were vital in efforts to attract the other races to enrol in the national schools, he said.

On the prime minister's invitation to the opposition parties to join the Barisan Nasional in efforts to jointly develop the nation and face external threats, Abdullah said this was a sincere one.

"This can further expand our coalition. It is up to them (opposition parties) to make their own evaluation. We will not be affected if they decline," he said.

-- BERNAMA

SHS ZUL JK