

18 JAN 2003

Keng Yaik-Election

GENERAL ELECTION ONLY AFTER ELECTORAL ROLL CLEANED UP - GERAKAN

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- The 11th general election should be called only after the Election Commission (EC) has cleaned up the electoral roll, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today.

He said it would be to the Barisan Nasional's (BN) disadvantage if the existing tampered list was used.

"I will raise this issue among the component parties that we must be satisfied with the electoral roll that has been corrected," he told reporters after chairing the party's monthly Central Committee meeting.

Dr Lim, who is also Primary Industries Minister, was responding to a question on speculations that the next general election could be called anytime in the light of several developments, including the completion of the redelineation of electoral boundaries nationwide.

A local Bahasa Malaysia daily reported today that the commission would call for a meeting on Tuesday to discuss preparations for the general election due in 2004.

He said the BN must take the initiative to identify discrepancies in the roll since the commission did not have enough manpower to check the list in detail.

"Over the years, the BN component parties have been told to check the list," he said.

Asked how widespread the discrepancies were, Dr Lim said: "There are some but I don't want to speculate."

In November last year, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad disclosed that names of 2.8 million registered voters have been transferred by certain parties to constituencies which they have nothing to do with.

The Prime Minister had said a thorough scrutiny of the electoral roll showed these voters did not have the address in these constituencies.

"That is why the number of registered voters is big, voters who are not from the constituency and voters with addresses different from that stated in their identity cards," Dr Mahathir was quoted as saying.

In its response, the commission said it was working closely with the National Registration Department to clean up the electoral roll but faced problems in determining the status of voters as their number was too big.

The commission urged political parties to assist to tackle the issue.

-- BERNAMA

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