

**Mafrel: Play your role to prevent fracas**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**April 21, 2007**

A polls watchdog said the fracas which marred the Ijok by-election nominations could have been avoided if the police, Election Commission (EC) and political parties had played their respective roles.

In a statement yesterday, Malaysian for Free and Fair Elections (Mafrel) chairperson Abd Malek Hussin said the police should have made sure that party supporters were separated from the onset.

"There should be space and a buffer between the groups manned by adequate police personnel to ensure peace," said Abd Malek.

The EC should also strongly remind participating political parties and candidates on the conduct of an election, he said.

Once these two institutions have made the necessary preparations, the onus was then on the political parties and candidates to make sure their party supporters conform to the requirements of the respective authorities.

"The nomination process should have been smooth, calm and without having to be over emotional and uncivilised," added Abd Malek.

**MB hit on head**

On the March 19 nominations, BN supporters reluctantly gave way to a PKR group as they made an attempt towards the nomination centre.

Soon after, supporters from both sides began trading insults and chants, resulting in shoving matches and projectiles being thrown against each other.

Several party supporters reportedly sustained light injuries, including Perlis Menteri Besar Shahidan Kassim who claimed that he was struck on the head by a mineral water bottle.

The police separated the rival groups later but no arrests were made.

Both groups have blamed and lodged separate police reports against each other over the ugly incident.

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/66270>