

Campaign by former top guns 'doesn't affect the forces'

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N SEMBILAN The involvement of several former top-ranking armed forces officials with the opposition cause would not bring any effect to those who are presently serving in the army.

NONE Such views were shared by army personnel when met by Malaysiakini during an army gathering with their field commander Lt-Jen Zulkiple Kassim in Port Dickson yesterday.

Private Bahrin Rizman, 23 (left), said the former top officers may influence former army personnel who served under them.

“If they are still leading the army, they may still be influential. We also do not know what they are campaigning for,” said the trainee from the Army Engineers Institute.

NONE Private Ariff Mohd, 22 (left), said those contesting are from a different era from the new recruits, who would be voting for the first time in this election.

“We did not join the forces when they were in charge. Hence, their campaign would not influence us,” he said when met at Army Basic Training Centre in Port Dickson.

PKR has placed former Army chief Jen (Rtd) Md Hashim Hussein as a candidate for the Johor Bahru parliamentary seat, against incumbent Shahrir Samad. Former Navy chief of logistics staff First Admiral Abdul Imran Abd Hamid is also contesting in Lumut under the PKR banner.

While Abdul Imran, who had served the Royal Malaysian Navy for 37 years, was not allowed to campaign in the Lumut naval base, his rival and incumbent Lumut MP Kong Cho Ha was allowed to enter with former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

NONE A female private who wished only to be known as Syarianah, 24, opined that the former top guns could participate in the election process as this is a democratic country. However, she said their campaign would not have any real effect.

Zulkiple (left), in his speech, had urged the army personnel to put the nation's interest first when voting.

“As army personnel they have the responsibility to the nation. You must consider

what is right and what is wrong," he said in representing the caretaker Defence Minister, Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, in the event.

Advanced voting for members of the armed forces and police begins today.

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