

## **EC to get indelible ink from new supplier for by-election**

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**By Koh Jun Lin**

The Election Commission (EC) is working to purchase indelible ink from a new supplier for the Kuala Besut by-election, said EC chief Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof.

NONE“We will try to get a better ink that can avoid past weaknesses... It will be from a different supplier and we will announce its silver nitrate content later, but we will ensure that its silver nitrate content would (be enough to) make it indelible,” he told a press conference today.

A major complaint from the 13th general election, where the ink made its Malaysian debut, was that some voters found it easily removable.

The ink was a recommendation from the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reform and one of the Bersih coalition’s demands to prevent voters from voting multiple times under false identities.

'Slow-drying and had stained ballot papers'

Based on a post-mortem of the recent general election, Abdul Aziz said the other two weaknesses of the previous batch of indelible ink were that it was slow-drying and had stained ballot papers. However, he stressed that such ballots remain valid.

He also clarified that the previous batch of indelible ink contained both food colouring and silver nitrate, not food colouring alone as earlier stated.

He was referring to a parliamentary reply supplied by the EC on June 26, which said, “No chemicals were used in the ink, they were instead replaced with food colouring ingredients which were approved.”

Prior to that, he had stated that the indelible ink contained one percent silver nitrate, which is supposed to remain for at least seven days after being applied. However, some voters had managed to remove it within hours of casting their ballots.

When asked if there will be another demonstration for the new indelible ink before the by election in July 24, he replied, “God willing, we will try.”

However, despite urgings from opposition leaders such as Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli,

he declined to name the supplier of the previous batch of indelible ink, saying that investigations on the matter are still ongoing.

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