

DAP: EC's move may cut voter numbers in cities

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DAP is questioning whether the Election Commission (EC) is trying to reduce the number of new voters in urban areas by not renewing the appointments of assistant registrars from political parties.

Serdang MP Ong Kian Ming (right) said DAP has received a letter dated Nov 13 last year that its over 100 assistant registrars will not have their appointments renewed, and that there would be no new appointments.

In a statement today, he said the decision, which affects all political parties, will affect unregistered voters in urban areas more severely, because this is where most unregistered voters live.

"These are also the areas with the largest number of Pakatan supporters. Thirteen out of the 15 parliament seats with more than 100,000 voters are Pakatan seats in urban areas.

"One cannot help but to speculate whether the EC's decision is influenced by the upcoming delineation exercise," he said.

Ong explained that if the number of urban voter increase, the EC would be facing more pressure to increase the number of urban constituencies.

The non-renewal of the appointments would reduce the number of new registrations in these areas, hence relieving some of the pressure, he said.

Ong added that the reason given by the EC for its decision is that it would help the commission coordinate and streamline its existing voter registration rules and processes, but says the reason given was unacceptable.

He said the decision would effectively stop all political parties from registering new voters at its events, and there are still 3.5 million to 4 million unregistered voters nationwide.

Citing the EC's figures, he also pointed out that Pakatan parties are also better than BN when it comes to registering voters, with 107,050 registered by Pakatan between January to June 2010 compared to BN's 59,351 new registrations over the

same period.

“If the EC wants to stop irresponsible AROs from registering voters improperly e.g. without their knowledge or by bribing them to change their IC address, then it should ask the attorney-general to prosecute these AROs under Section 3(1)(a) of the Election Offences Act rather than to stop all AROs from carrying out their legitimate activities,” he said.

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