

RM30 mil set aside for upcoming S'wak election
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The Election Commission (EC) is ready to conduct the 10th Sarawak state election and has set aside RM30 million for purpose, EC chairman Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof said.

NONE Although the current term of the state assembly would only expire in July next year, he said, the commission was ready for the poll anytime.

"We are always ready," he told reporters after opening the state-level voter registration exercise at the Sarawak Riverbank, here today.

Sarawak has 71 state seats.

The EC allocated RM31 million to carry out the state election in 2006 with the bulk of the expenditure was for helicopter charges due to accessibility problems in certain areas.

Half a million Sarawakians yet to register

On the voter registration exercise, Abdul Aziz said, the state EC targeted to register up to 450,000 people in the state who had reached the voting age of 21 but had yet to register as voters.

He said political parties, government officers and non-government organisations could assist the EC to achieve the target.

"As of March 31 this year, there were about 479,553 people aged 21 and above who had yet to register as voters in the state," he said, adding that the EC had implemented outreach programmes in rural areas to register new voters.

He said the EC had carried out 187 outreach programmes during the first half of this year but the response was poor, with only 4,726 people having been registered under the programme.

Earlier in his speech, Abdul Aziz said the EC had so far registered a total of 940,924 voters in Sarawak.

"Last year, the EC registered 29,278 new voters compared to 18,830 in 2008," he said.

- Bernama

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