

**Nov 4 polls for Batu Sapi and Galas
Malaysiakini.com
October 15, 2010**

The Election Commission (EC) has set Nov 4 as polling day for both the Batu Sapi and Galas by-elections.

With today's announcement, the nation will witness next month its 12th and 13th by-elections since the watershed 2008 general election.

EC chairperson Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof said the EC has set Oct 26 for nominations for Batu Sapi, a parliament seat in Sabah, coinciding with that of Galas, a state seat in Kelantan.

Both seats fell vacant following the sudden death of their representatives - PBS parliamentarian Edmond Chong Ket Wah, who was killed in a motorbike accident on Oct 9, and PAS assemblyperson Che Hashim Sulaiman in Galas who died of cancer on Sept 27.

Abdul Aziz explained that the by-elections will be held concurrently for three reasons. Firstly the law does not prohibit the EC from hosting both polls at the same time.

"Secondly we have the experience of managing by-elections simultaneously such as in Bukit Gantang (Perak),



Bukit Selambau (Kedah) and Batang Ai (Sarawak).

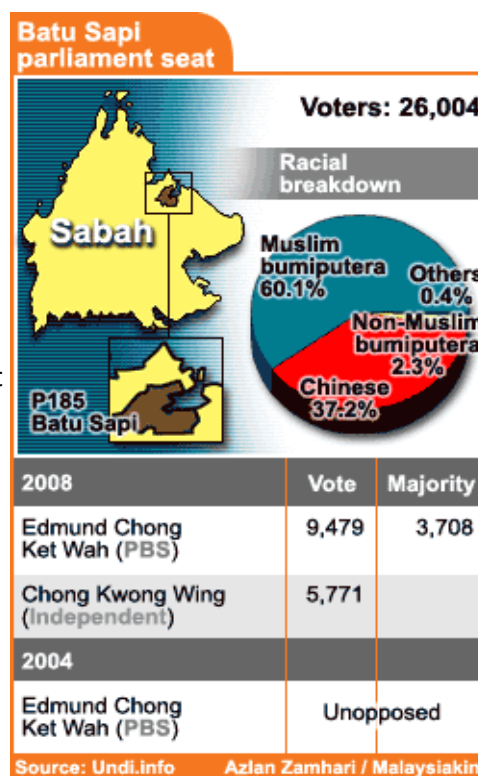
"And lastly from our discussions earlier today, we concluded that as the time period in running the by-election is shorter and it doesn't prolong the politicking period, and most of all it saves costs and reduces tension," he said.

He said that the nine-day campaign period would be sufficient for political parties with enough time to choose their candidates. will

Another pressing reason for the by-elections to be held concurrently is because there are many public holidays and party elections that might hinder the process.

The EC has appointed Mohamad Hamsan Awang Supain, secretary of the Sandakan Municipal Council, as the returning officer and he will be assisted by four EC officials and 405 election officers.

The nomination centre will be the Sandakan Community Hall which also double up as a





polling station together with 11 schools and one state library for 45 streams.

RM1.3mil allocated for Batu Sapi

Abdul Aziz said the electoral rolls have been updated as of Oct 9 this year, with a total of 25,582 voters, including 1,535 postal voters.

In the 2008 general election, Chong, a PBS candidate, had won the Batu Sapi parliamentary seat with 9,479 votes, beating Independent candidate Chung Kwong Wing by a majority of 3,708 votes.

During the 2008 polls the breakdown of voters according to race was: Chinese at 37.2 percent, Muslim bumiputera at 60.1 percent, non-Muslim bumiputera at 2.3 percent and others 0.3 percent.

However, since the electoral roll has been updated to October this year, Abdul Aziz (*left*) added that there had been a rise in the number of voters as young as 21 and, some over 90.

He also provided the breakdown of the current electoral roll according to the two state constituencies under Batu Sapi - Sekong and Karamunting

In Sekong, Chinese voters numbered 2,366 or 21 percent followed by Sabah bumiputeras at 6,031 or 53 percent.

The rest include 2,167 Malay (19 percent), 676 others (6 percent), 41 Sarawak bumiputeras (0.36 percent), 37 Indian (0.33 percent) and three Orang Asli 0.03 (percent).

Whereas in Karamunting, the Chinese make up 9,546 voters or 37 percent followed by Sabah bumiputeras at 9,565 also 37 percent.

The rest include 5,000 Malays (20 percent), 1,213 Others (5 percent), 92 Indians (0.36 percent), 158 Sarawak bumiputeras (0.62 percent) and eight Orang Asli (0.03 percent).

The EC chairperson disclosed that RM2.6 million has been allocated for Batu Sapi and Galas, with RM1.3 million each.

Although voting has been slotted on a weekday, Abdul Aziz said that they expected a turnout of 80 percent.

"We are convinced that there will be more people voting on a working day. In Manek Urai, for instance, we had a turnout of 83 percent. While, during the other by-elections held at weekends we received 70 percent turnout," he said.