

EC gets rid of candidate objection period

The Malaysian Insider

December 19, 2011

By Yow Hong Chieh

PUTRAJAYA, Dec 19 — There will be no more objection period for candidates in the next general election, the Election Commission (EC) said today.

“The onus is now on the EC (to check if a candidate is qualified),” its chairman Tan Sri Aziz Yusof told reporters here.

Political parties that object to candidates they deem unqualified to contest which the EC has approved must take the matter to court now, he explained.

“But that very morning (on nomination day), sorry lah,” he said.

Currently, personal details of confirmed candidates are displayed for one hour after the nomination period ends, during which objections to their eligibility can be raised.

Malaysia’s relatively short objection period — compared to three days in Bangladesh and two weeks in Thailand — has been criticised by some for not giving stakeholders adequate time to scrutinise candidates’ backgrounds.

Aziz (picture) said candidates will now also not be allowed to withdraw from the race once they have submitted their names to the returning officer to allow quick printing of the ballot paper.

“Even if you withdraw your name, your name will still be there,” he said.

He said the changes were made at the recommendation of the parliamentary select committee on electoral reform, and stressed that the EC was working hard to put into place other suggestions mooted by the polls panel.

These include stepping up efforts to clean the electoral roll in co-operation with the National Registration Department (NRD), police and the armed forces’ Records and Pensions Department.

“The electoral roll is cleaned every day. If political parties find one or two mistakes, they don’t have to publicise them to the media.

“Let us know, we can fix it... Sometimes we mistype, key in wrongly. This is the spirit,” Aziz said.

He added that the electoral roll will be displayed for 14 days instead of seven days starting from next quarter.

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/ec-gets-rid-of-candidate-objection-period/>