

Indelible ink just first step to clean elections, says MAFREL
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By Lisa J. Ariffin

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 22 — Malaysians for Free and Fair Elections (MAFREL) today welcomed the use of indelible ink in the upcoming general election, but said it was not enough to ensure the polling process would be above board.

“The use of indelible ink alone is not enough to ensure the election is clean, fair and transparent. More time and focus should be given to cleaning up the electoral roll,” Syed Ibrahim Syed Noh, chairman of the election watchdog, told reporters today at a press conference here.

“What more with the display of 42,051 doubtful names (provided) by the Election Commission (EC) for verification by voter or kin,” he added.

Additionally, Syed Ibrahim said the newly-introduced advance voting process should undergo a stress test to ensure any weaknesses can be determined and fixed before implemented during the general election.

The EC previously announced it will be replacing the controversial postal ballots with an advance voting system.

“In addition, partners of police, army and defence personnel should not have to perform advance voting. They should instead undergo the normal voting process,” he said.

“This is because they are not the ones on duty and serving in designated camps. They can go to polling centres like other normal citizens,” he added.

Syed Ibrahim also said the announcement by the EC on the elimination of the candidate objection period was a step in the wrong direction.

He said the commission should instead extend the objection period to one week for greater scrutiny of candidates by the voters.

Mafrel urged the EC to consider its suggestions in the push for clean and fair elections.

“If the election process is widely perceived as not credible, then the government formed after the election is also not credible,” Mafrel technical advisor Hasnah Hashim said.

Those interested in volunteering for Mafrel can join their Facebook page or contact Mafrel secretary Sdr Arphan Ahmad at 012-2731016.

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