

**Manipulation Of Former Soldiers In Postal Votes Claim - Defence Chief**  
**Bernama**  
**August 18, 2011**

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 (Bernama) -- Chief of Defence Forces Gen Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin today dismissed a claim by four former soldiers of irregularities in postal voting, saying they had been used by certain quarters in the political interest.

"I am disappointed by the action of these quarters who have manipulated the former soldiers for their personal interest," he told a news conference at the Defence Ministry, here.

Also present were Chief of Army Gen Datuk Zulkifli Zainal Abidin, Chief of Air Force Gen Tan Sri Rodzali Daud and Chief of Navy Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Jaafar.

The four former soldiers had told a news conference organised by PAS yesterday that they had been directed by commanding officers, while in service, to mark thousands of postal ballots.

Zulkifeli said postal voting by soldiers was conducted in a clean, transparent and professional manner without any interference from their superiors.

"The postal balloting and handling of the ballot boxes are monitored by representatives of the contesting political parties and independent observers," he said.

Zulkifeli also said that certain quarters had misinterpreted the plan to set up a territorial army company in every parliamentary constituency.

"These personnel can be mobilised in certain circumstances and their services are needed in the defence of the nation.

"They are reserves who are subjected to the normal voting procedure," he said.

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsgeneral.php?id=609046>