

EC wants postal balloting to envelope more voters
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IPOH, Oct 28 — The Election Commission (EC) is mooting the extension of the postal or early voting systems to cover voters from the media, medical, airlines, and offshore oil and gas industries, according to a Bernama Online report today.

“We understand that some media groups are unable to cast their votes because duty calls, so do we do nothing? Therefore, we feel changes should be made to allow postal or early voting,” said EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof was quoted as saying in the report.

According to Aziz, the suggestions will be raised during hearings by the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reforms, which was formed by the Najib administration following the tumultuous July 9 rally for free and fair elections organised by Bersih 2.0.

“This proposal will be discussed with the committee later. Actually, it’s not just the media which is affected but airlines personnel, the medical profession and oil rig workers too,” Aziz added.

Postal ballots are currently available to members of the police and armed forces based outside their constituencies, as well as election workers involved in the polling process.

The early voting or advance voting system was suggested by the EC in January last year as a possible replacement for postal ballots.

This latest proposal to broaden the scope of the postal vote is unlikely to be welcomed by either the federal opposition or the Bersih 2.0 movement.

Both have stressed the need to overhaul the system, which they say is open to manipulation and ballot-stuffing.

A restructuring of postal balloting is also one of the eight electoral reform demands made by Bersih.

The movement has already accused Putrajaya of stalling on electoral reforms, after the government refused to pledge holding off on the next general election until the PSC recommendations can be implemented.

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