No Need To Amend Constitution To Use Indelible Ink On Voters
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- There is no need to amend the Federal Constitution in order to use indelible ink on voters in the coming 13th General Election, but only to amend the Elections (Conduct of Elections) Regulations 1981.

This was told by Attorney-General (AG) Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail to the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) on Electoral Reforms at its fifth meeting Wednesday.

PSC chairman Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili said the amendment or adding a new ruling involved Article 19 of the Elections (Conduct of Elections) Regulations 1981, whereby upon obtaining consent from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, the use of indelible ink could be implemented anytime, but this matter must be tabled in Parliament.

"The AG had verbally explained the use of indelible ink on voters, and the PSC was satisfied with his view that if the Election Commission wants to use indelible ink at any time, it does not involve amending the constitution but only the elections regulations.

"The PSC will consider the matter before making a decision," he told reporters after chairing the PSC meeting at Parliament building, here.

Abdul Gani when approached, however, declined to say anything about the meeting.

On the proposed automatic registration of voters upon reaching the age of 21, Ongkili said Abdul Gani informed them that this would require amending the Federal Constitution and related regulations.

He said Article 119 (4)(b) involving eligible date -- the date a person could apply to be registered as a voter -- would have to be amended.

Ongkili, who is also Science, Technology and Innovation Minister, said this matter would also be considered and decided on at the next PSC meeting.

Asked on Abdul Gani's conflicting statement previously when the indelible ink was first proposed for the 2008 general election, Ongkili said:

"He (Abdul Gani) is still consistent in his views. It's just that it was stated previously that if you don't want to amend the regulations, then you have to amend the constitution. But in this case, we can amend the elections regulations."

Ongkili said the PSC, hence asked Abdul Gani to prepare the document to state there was no need to amend the constitution to implement the use of idelible ink, and the document to be submitted to the PSC next Monday.

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