

OTK slams MCA's 'out-of-touch' voters excuse
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 13 – Former MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat has again slammed his party for saying Malaysians abroad were “out-of-touch” and should not be given the right to vote.

“I was indeed shocked by MCA’s objection to postal voting by Malaysians residing abroad on the ground of logistics and being ‘out of touch’ with the situation in Malaysia,” he said in his blog posting yesterday.

The Pandan MP (picture) was referring to an MCA delegation’s stand at a polls reform panel’s public hearing last Friday.

MCA central committee member Datuk Ei Kim Hock told the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reform that Malaysians overseas were not qualified to vote as they are “out of touch” with the current state of affairs in the country.

Ei said the MCA’s research had shown that most Malaysians overseas only received information from questionable sources, which may not reflect the true conditions on the ground.

MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek has since clarified that the MCA did not agree with overseas voting purely because it presented a “logistical nightmare” as considerable resources would have to be devoted to ensure its success.

In his blog, Ong said using the same argument, he would also risk losing his voting right as the news from media sources other than the party-controlled organs and the mainstream media could be touted as “disinformation”.

He also said that voters who hardly read any political news due to their level of literacy or individual preference would certainly be deemed “out of sync” with domestic politics, thus “disqualifying” themselves from voting in the coming general election.

“I am amused by the argument that only Malaysians residing in Malaysia would know best the track record of candidates contesting in the various constituents,” he said, calling the party “out of sync with the present electorate”.

On the logistics in conducting postal voting for Malaysians abroad, the Pandan MP said to shun postal voting on the pretext of averting logistics difficulties is “no excuse for denying the constitutional rights” of the overseas Malaysians.

The ruling Barisan Nasional government’s mandate expires in 2013 but Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is expected to call for fresh polls in the next six months.

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