

MCA out of touch, says Aussie-based group
The Malaysian Insider
November 14, 2011
By Debra Chong

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 14 — An Australia-based citizen group today slammed MCA for discriminating against Malaysians abroad who qualified as voters, saying the ruling party proved it was “totally out-of-touch” in today’s world.

The Australian chapter of a grassroots group that calls itself Saya Anak Bangsa Malaysia (SABMoz) was responding to the Barisan Nasional coalition’s Chinese party’s opposition to allowing qualified Malaysians living overseas exercise their constitutional right to vote.

“Whatever MCA’s rationale for this discriminative [sic] proposal, the party is showing that it is totally out of touch, not just with community sentiment, but the modern world,” SABMoz president, David Teoh said in a media statement.

“If MCA openly advocates limiting this right to vote to people living in Malaysia, it might as well say it does not stand for full democracy in Malaysia,” he said.

He pointed out that the existing electoral laws bar Malaysians living abroad from registering as voters unless they are “serving in the armed forces or working for the Malaysian government in high commissions and consulates”.

He said giving every citizen their constitutional right to vote is a basic rule of democracy.

“Any government that is against a free, fair and inclusive vote is afraid of the outcome,” he added.

Teoh is also the Australian co-ordinator for Bersih 2.0, the 80-member civil rights movement that is lobbying for electoral reform.

He said if Malaysians were to adopt MCA’s attitude instead of pushing for change, the country would not grow.

SABMoz describes itself as a registered association in Melbourne focused on advancing good governance practices in Malaysia, especially the promotion of stewardship, integrity, accountability and transparency.

The group has been at the forefront in pushing Bersih 2.0’s eight electoral reform demands and voting rights for overseas Malaysians for the past year.

It held its first annual general meeting two days ago.

The Malaysian Insider
Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider
Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/mca-out-of-touch-says-aussie-based-group/>