

**EC says 42,000 'doubtful voters' does not make roll 'dirty'**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 16 — The Election Commission (EC) insisted today that the existence of 42,051 "doubtful voters" in the current electoral roll does not make the registry "dirty".

Its chairman, Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof, after hosting the EC's first official briefing with a group of MPs in Parliament here, repeatedly stressed at a press conference that the commission has been doing its best to ensure the roll is free from discrepancies.

But it is impossible to have a roll that is "100 per cent perfect", he said, adding that no electoral roll in the world is absolutely clean.

"But in Malaysia, when we sent the names of 12.6 million registered voters to the National Registration Department (NRD) to check, the ones we say are doubtful are only 42,051.

"That makes it just 0.3 per cent. Is that dirty? Do you conclude that the roll is dirty just because 0.3 per cent are doubtful?" Abdul Aziz charged during the press conference.

"You've got to be fair to the EC," he urged.

He lamented that the EC's "hands are tied" as they are prohibited under law to remove a voter's name from the roll without proper verification.

The 42,051 "doubtful voters" Abdul Aziz was referring to are the names of those registered in the roll but whose records could not be found with the NRD.

"The NRD could not validate these voters, whether or not they are dead or alive.

"When the NRD contacted them... (they received) no response," he said.

He pointed, however, to the possibility that some of the over 42,000 voters may have applied for new MyKads but were yet to collect them.

"But the EC, under the law, cannot delete these names because if we do, and the person is still alive (there will be repercussions)," he said.

Addressing the issue of dead voters whose names were yet to be deleted from the registry, Abdul Aziz said the EC could not remove an individual's name unless it receives a death certificate for the person.

He also acknowledged complaints of multiple voters, some up to 100 or more, who are registered to one address but said this did not mean that the group was registered to one house.

"What happened is that they could be living in one locality, which would be one neighbourhood or village," he explained.

Abdul Aziz said the EC will meet this Thursday to deliberate on the 22 recommendations made by the recently-approved report by the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) on electoral reforms.

"We will then issue the EC's stand on each of the 22 recommendations," he said, adding that the commission has been working hard to adopt recommendations in the PSC's interim report passed last December.

Civil society group Bersih 2.0 and opposition lawmakers have criticised the PSC's recommendations as lacking in true reform, insisting that the panel had failed to touch on specific issues.

Bersih 2.0 also plans to hold its third rally for free and fair elections at Dataran Merdeka this April 28, hoping to pressure the government into embarking on further reforms to the country's election system.

"Bersih wants to do an assembly? Is it feasible? Just because of 42,000 or 0.3 per cent of voters which they assume is tantamount to a dirty roll?" Abdul Aziz remarked today.

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