

EC: Minimum 10-day campaign period for GE13
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PUTRAJAYA, April 20 — The Election Commission (EC) has said the coming 13th general election will have a minimum campaign period of 10 days.

EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof said yesterday the decision was made at its special meeting the previous day where it discussed the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) on Electoral Reform.

“The meeting also acknowledged that the process to appoint the EC chairman, deputy chairman and EC members should be reviewed to instil confidence that the body is truly free from any influence of the executive and the legislative,” he said in a statement.

According to a Bernama report, Abdul Aziz (picture) said the meeting also agreed that the body be restructured with a view to giving it appropriate legal powers.

The EC also welcomed the move to strengthen its position as an independent body responsible for handling the country’s elections, said the report.

He also said the review would raise the need to increase its human resources and upgrade of posts as well as sufficient financial allocation in line with move to strengthen the EC’s structure.

These improvements were among 22 recommendations made by the PSC.

Seven of 10 recommendations made by the PSC in its interim report had been implemented including the use of indelible ink, advance voting for armed forces and police personnel, cleaning up the electoral roll, doing away with objection period for candidates on nomination day, and providing facilities for Malaysians overseas to register as postal voters.

Abdul Aziz said the EC would take continuous steps to clean up the electoral rolls as required by the PSC.

“The EC will also co-operate with other agencies including the National Registration Department, the armed forces, police and MIMOS in cleaning up the electoral roll,” he was quoted as saying.

On the PSC’s recommendation that a committee be set up to supervise and scrutinise the EC’s effort to clean up the electoral roll, he said this was contrary to the EC’s position as an independent body as provided for under the Federal Constitution.

On automatic registration of voters, he said the EC would have to study the matter from various angles, including its implication to the provisions in the Federal Constitution.

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