

Nazri: No foreigner given voting rights in Malaysia
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 29 — Putrajaya denied today allegations that foreigners in Malaysia have been allowed to register as voters for the national polls.

This, explained Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Aziz to the Dewan Rakyat, is because only citizens with valid MyKads are allowed to register for the electoral roll.

"No foreigner has been registered as a voter because the main way to trace an applicant's qualification as a voter is through his identity card," he said.

Nazri added that those who register with the Election Commission (EC) would be subjected to a 33-layer vetting process through the Agency Link-Up System, which links the commission's database with the National Registration Department's (NRD).

As such, he explained, the EC could compare the names of those newly registered with records from the NRD.

Nazri also insisted the EC is an independent body, despite claims to the otherwise from those on the opposition bench.

"So it (the EC) will reject the application from a person who is not a citizen," he said.

The Padang Rengas MP also pointed to Article 119 of the Federal Constitution, which stipulates that only Malaysians aged 21 years and above, who reside in any electoral constituency within Malaysia and who has not lost their right to vote, may be registered voters here.

"But the EC welcomes those with information (on foreigners being given voting rights) to come forward so they can investigate further," he said.

Interjecting, Saifuddin Nasution (PKR-Machang) stood up to remind the House of a recent admission by the EC that there are presently 42,000 "questionable" voters in the electoral roll and whose names could not be traced back to the NRD's records.

"Meaning, this problem exists, although it has been repeatedly said that it only involves 42,000 voters when a total of 12.3 million will be gazetted in the roll for the coming polls.

"What's the explanation, then, when this admission came from the EC itself?" he asked.

Nazri declined to respond, saying he had not received early notice of such a query.

He, however, pointed out to Saifuddin that these "questionable" voters would not be able to cast their ballots if they do not have existing records with the NRD even though their names are on the electoral roll.

“There is no need to worry. Say if voting is tomorrow, the person would have to come with an identity card. If this person does not have one, he cannot vote,” he said.

Nazri also insisted the EC is an independent body, despite claims of the contrary from those on the opposition bench.

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