

**13th General Election To Have Minimum 10-day Campaigning Period: Election Commission  
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PUTRAJAYA, April 19 (Bernama) -- The coming 13th general election will have a minimum 10-day campaigning period, Election Commission (EC) chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof said today.

He said the decision was made at the commission's special meeting yesterday where they discussed each of 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.

He 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 the commission and its position as an independent body responsible for handling the country's elections.

Abdul Aziz said the review would ultimately 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.

He said 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 cooperate with other agencies including the National Registration Department, the armed forces, police and Mimos in cleaning up the electoral roll," he said.

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

"The EC will always strive to do its best in carrying out its function and responsibility fairly to all those involved in the election," he said.

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