

EC: Only Recording Allowed Of Manifesto Presentation Over RTM
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KUALA LUMPUR, June 22 (Bernama) -- Political parties wishing to take advantage of the government's concession allowing them to present their election manifesto over Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) will have to be contented with doing it via a recording.

Election Commission (EC) chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Yusof said the decision not to have live broadcast was to avoid sensitivities detrimental to an individual's personality, race and religion as well as security and public order.

"If we allow it live, RTM may not be able to control what is being said," he told Bernama and RTM during the programme "Terus Terang" produced by Nasionalfm radio station, here today.

Abdul Aziz said the material to be presented is subjected to editing, which is a normal procedure and not just applicable to political parties.

Information Communication and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim last June 7 said political parties would be allowed to present their manifestos through RTM once approved by the cabinet.

Free and fair media access was among 22 proposals submitted by the parliamentary select committee to the EC after they were passed without debate at the Dewan Rakyat on April 3.

Abdul Aziz said the ministry would allow political parties to present their manifestos via RTM only if they had obtained approval from the EC.

This was to ensure only political parties that had registered and were contesting in the election had the advantage, he said.

Abdul Aziz said the schedule would be set by RTM and that all parties would will be allotted equal airtime.

Bahasa Melayu is compulsory in the presentation on TV1, while material in other languages would be aired on radio.

Meanwhile, Abdul Aziz said the campaign period for the 13th general election may exceed 11 days on the request by various quarters including political parties.

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