

EC mulling postal votes for all M'sians abroad

TheStarOnline

July 12, 2012

PUTRAJAYA: The Election Commission (EC) is studying a proposal to allow all Malaysians overseas to cast their ballots by post, on condition they had returned to the country at least once in the five years before the general election.

"We want Malaysian voters overseas to be aware of the current political developments in the country," EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof said during a media briefing and demonstration on the use of the indelible ink at its headquarters here yesterday.

At present, only full-time Malaysian students and their spouses as well as civil servants and their spouses who are based abroad are allowed to apply to be postal voters.

This has led to complaints by those who are not within the category, such as private sector employees working overseas.

Abdul Aziz said the EC was studying whether any legal amendments were required to implement the PSC recommendation as well as the condition that voters must return to the country within five years.

He said that despite the concerns on allowing overseas Malaysians to vote, only 2,700 of those currently eligible to be overseas postal voters have applied to do so.

"There is nothing stopping anyone who is presently qualified to be a postal voter to apply, yet the response is poor among our students and civil servants abroad," he said.

Meanwhile, Bernama quoted EC secretary Datuk Kamaruddin Mohamed Baria as saying that only 35 out of 104 Malaysian missions abroad have been actively registering voters.

The EC has agreed to simplify the process of returning the voter registration form (Form A) after taking into account feedback from Malaysians abroad, he said in statement.

He said the completed documents can be sent personally or through another applicant to the assistant registrar of voters at foreign missions.

Copyright © 1995-2012 Star Publications (M) Bhd

Source: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/7/12/nation/11648361&sec=nation>