

Voting In Australia Smooth, Orderly - Malaysian Envoy
Bernama
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MELBOURNE, April 28 (Bernama) -- Malaysians turned up in large numbers to cast their vote for the 13th General Election (GE13) at three polling centres in Australia Sunday.

Officials in Canberra, Melbourne and Perth said the postal voting was smooth and orderly, which they described as a credit to Malaysians.

Malaysian High Commissioner to Australia, Datuk Salman Ahmad, told Bernama that "everything went smoothly".

"There was a good atmosphere with Malaysians catching up with friends and relatives. We had some food stalls and I think everyone had a good time," he said.

Considering it was the first time polling was conducted overseas, he said the experience would be helpful in the future.

In Melbourne, where about 1,700 voters had registered, the crowds were overwhelming with two queues stretching more than 70 metres outside the Consulate in St Kilda Rd, for almost the whole day.

A young Malaysian said she had arrived at the Malaysian Consulate at 10am and had completed voting about 2pm.

"It was not a pleasant experience standing for so long but I am very hap I had the opportunity to vote," she said.

Polling in Perth, which had about 350 registered voters, also went without a hitch.

Many Malaysians travelled long distances to vote. Perhaps, the longest distance covered was by a Malaysian in Sydney who found his name in the Perth list.

He flew almost five hours to Perth, which cost him about A\$640 in airfares alone.

A Brisbane doctor flew to Melbourne, incurring costs of about A\$350 in airfares with incidentals amounting to about A\$250.

"I am lucky I have accommodation at a friend's apartment in Melbourne," he said.

Sydney voters mostly went to Canberra while those in Adelaide came here.

Polling could not be held in Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide because they do not have Malaysian consulate services.

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