

Does the Election Commission really think Malaysians have a short memory?
Malaysian Insider
July 13 , 2013

Here is a bunch of questions for Malaysians.

Growing up, did you accept it when the neighbourhood bully extorted canteen money from you very week? In school, did you suck it up and accept it when your class teacher punished you with lower marks, just because he could?

At work, do you turn the other way when your boss garnishes your pay packet by several hundred ringgit with "administrative" charges?

In life, will you accept it if the likes of Perkasa's Datuk Ibrahim Ali and the Umno-owned media tell you to leave the country of your birth if you do not accept their terms?

If the answers to all the questions is no, here is another question: why allow a partisan group to conduct the country's elections and devalue the ultimate right of any citizen in a democratic country – the right for your vote to count. Surely, this too amounts to bullying, extortion, unfair and arrogant behaviour.

The Reid Commission report – which formed the backbone of the Federal Constitution – envisaged the Election Commission as a body which would be independent and impartial to all.

The EC is anything but impartial. And this was clear in the run-up to the general elections and since.

Take the petition to nullify the win of Pakatan Rakyat's Tian Chua in Batu. The Barisan Nasional candidate, Dominic Lau, who lost by a yawning 13,000 majority wants the result overturned because he says that Chua Tian Chang was previously fined RM2,000 by the High Court, which meant that the opposition politician should have been disqualified from contesting the polls.

Now for the backstory. In June 2010, there was some controversy over whether the politician popularly called Tian Chua should vacate his seat and whether he would be barred from contesting elections for a five-year period because of the RM2,000 fine.

The judge did not think so and the EC issued a letter as recently as a month before the general election this year to state that Tian Chua was not disqualified by the fine.

But since then, the EC has shifted its position. It has told the court that it had no objection to BN challenging the Batu result and Tian Chua's status to contest the polls.

His lawyer, Edmund Bon, noted that this was probably the first time in the country that the EC was saying that its own returning officer could have been wrong in allowing Tian Chua to contest.

This is not an isolated case of perceived bias. At some point in the run-up to the polls, Tan Sri Aziz Mohd Yusof, Datuk Wan Ahmad Wan Omar and other members of the EC stopped caring if their statements or pronouncements betrayed bias or partisanship.

They did not care because they figured that most Malaysians are a whining bunch with a 100-day memory. Eventually, the critics would get tired, bored and move on.

When told that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was requesting Australia's help to monitor the elections, Wan Ahmad said that Anwar was "an attention seeker who has no dignity in trying to tarnish the image of our country and the people".

When asked the legality of the caretaker government using government assets to campaign, Aziz incorrectly invoked the law and told Malaysians that the BN politicians were allowed to do so.

When asked why it did not act against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak for bribery under the Election Offences Act when the latter told Sibu voters that if they voted in the BN candidate, they would receive RM5 million for flood mitigation, the EC brushed it off.

And then there was the indelible ink fiasco. Till today, no one knows what was used on May 5.

But Aziz, Wan Ahmad and gang are still calling the shots and conducting elections, and refusing to tell Malaysians which company supplied the so-called indelible ink.

They figure that Malaysians with their 100-day memory cannot do much. So here they are at Kuala Besut, once again talking about transparency and not really believing the words that escape their lips or caring if they enjoy public confidence as set out in the Federal Constitution.

The EC does not care and they are counting on Malaysians also not caring, enough. – July 13, 2013.

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