

EC cleaning up electoral rolls, says it will issue regular reports
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Stung by repeated criticisms over tainted electoral rolls, the Election Commission (EC) has formed an internal committee to clean up the voter lists with the first report to be released later this month.

EC deputy chairman Datuk Wan Ahmad Wan Omar (pic) said the committee began work after the May 5 general elections and would ensure the rolls for the next elections would be reliable and free from controversy.

"It is the EC's main priority to review the electoral rolls which has been said to be problematic by certain quarters.

"EC officials from all states are working together to clean up the electoral rolls and the committee will issue a report this month and from time to time," Wan Ahmad told The Malaysian Insider in Kuala Lumpur.

Electoral watchdog Bersih 2.0 and other civil groups have been asking for the rolls to be cleaned up since Election 2008, after allegations surfaced of phantom voters and foreigners in the lists based on identity cards issued by the National Registration Department.

Some 13.3 million people are registered to vote in Malaysia, which has a 29.3 million population.

Bersih 2.0 co-chairman Datuk S.Ambiga told a forum last Saturday that she did not rule out another rally to protest the electoral rolls if the EC failed to clean it up before conducting a parliamentary seat redelineation exercise this year.

The Federal Constitution says a redelineation exercise can be carried out every eight years. The last was in 2003.

Wan Ahmad told The Malaysian Insider that those who ridiculed the EC's efforts in carrying out the exercise should view it positively and with a rational mind.

"The last redelineation was done in 2003, so the EC could repeat the process in 2011 but did not do so in preparation for the 13th general election

"Do we want the process to be done in another 20 years?" he asked.

Wan Ahmad criticised Bersih 2.0 for making accusations without getting to know what the EC had been doing to ensure a better conduct of general elections in Malaysia.

On the use of indelible ink in the Kuala Besut by-election, Wan Ahmad said that the EC had decided to have voters dip their finger into the bottle, as there were reports during the general election of polling clerks who applied it 'unevenly'.

This he said had resulted in the ink not being able to last for a specified period.

"The indelible ink is only an additional measure to prevent instances of double voting and

what's more important is the MyKad.

"We have to understand that in the recently polls, the EC has enforced the ruling for the voters to have the ink applied on their finger. So there was bound to be some unavoidable problems," the EC deputy chairman said.

When asked about the percentage of silver nitrate in the ink to be used in the by-election, Wan Ahmad said the EC would demonstrate the difference between applying and dipping fingers in a bottle in a press conference soon.

PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar had said the party would file a civil action today against the EC over the indelible ink fiasco. - 15 July 2014.

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