



# SARAWAK DAYAK IBAN ASSOCIATION (SADIA)

## MEMORANDUM

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011

From: The Sarawak Dayak Iban Association (SADIA)

To: The Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) On Electoral Reform

Subject: Inputs recommended for inclusion in the PSC's Report to Parliament

### 1. INTRODUCTION

First and foremost, we would like to express our deep gratitude to the Committee for according us this opportunity to provide inputs from SADIA for inclusion by the Committee in its report to Parliament.

### 2. OUR VIEWS

2.1 We have the honour to submit our views, as follows:

While the recommendations so far submitted by the Committee to Parliament – the use of the indelible ink and the chance given to eligible Sabahans and Sarawakians working in the Peninsula (what about those Malaysian citizens outside the country?) to cast their votes from there – are welcomed, we feel that three other components of reforms to the electoral system should have been included, namely **automatic voter registration and compulsory voting and Local Government elections.**

#### 2.2 Automatic registration

There is no reason why automatic registration cannot be introduced into the Malaysian electoral system. Any Malaysian citizen upon reaching the voting age (now 21 years) shall be deemed to be a registered voter for the purpose of the election law.

It is more democratic and in line with the universal suffrage. It will save a lot of tax payers' money and time incurred by the Election Commission in registering voters on a

voluntary basis. Under this system, according to estimate by Commission itself, there are about 4 million Malaysians who are potential voters but are not on the registers. Of these, there are some 40,000 Sarawakians. And the numbers are growing bigger by the day as more and more Malaysians attain the age of 21 years annually.

The present practice of allowing political parties to register voters is also open to abuse. Political organizations with a lot of resources will register more voters to add to their supporters and may not register those who openly support or are potential voters of the Opposition. Such registration works against the interests of the voters who live in scattered longhouses in the interior of Sarawak because of the poor means of communication and large expenditure involved.

### **2.3 Compulsory voting**

This will increase the percentage of turn-outs at polling stations and that of votes cast during each election. People will feel obliged to vote and elect the legislators of their choice.

### **2.4 Local Government elections**

This was introduced during the time of Colonial Government but was abolished in the 1980s in Sarawak. They must be revisited if we are to become a fully democratic country.

At this stage, we propose: marry the three, and the democratic foundations of Malaysia will be greatly strengthened for the common good.

### **2.5 Gerrymandering of constituencies**

When the next delimitation exercise is held, Sarawak should be allocated more state and parliamentary seats as more population of the state increases. The case in point is the Parliamentary Constituency of Sibul where the Ibans interests are not sufficiently catered for. Please refer to appendix 01 for details; there are several other constituencies having similar problems. To reduce manipulations, the map together with the electoral roll showing the proposed demarcations of constituencies should be on display including in the longhouses for the public to suggest amendments/additions thereto for at least six months.

### **2.6 Electoral Rolls - Back to old format**

The names of all voters from each longhouse or village were in one roll. The roll was easy to update – the names of deceased voters could be deleted from time to time, or those of new voters could be added without going through the rigmarole as the of filling the present system demands. Now the application forms must be handed back to the Election Commission to be further checked and verified as to authenticity, but that kind of process has another defect: the rejection of names submitted for registration is

arbitrary in the sense that simple spelling mistakes in names of persons or places have been made grounds for rejection of right to vote from applicants who may perfectly be eligible Malaysians, but are excluded by mere technicality. The answer is the automatic voter registration, above referred to.

**2.7 Campaign period:** 21 days – acceptable.

## **2.8 The 36- hour with draw period**

During this time a candidate whose nomination papers have been accepted by the Returning Officers is given a choice: to continue or not to proceed with his or her participation in that election. This right to withdraw is open to abuse: such electoral system encourages corruption and graft. It must be abolished. We support revisiting the previous system where once the nominations had been accepted; all names of candidates remain on the ballot papers. Withdrawals were allowed by public announcement in the media, though technically voters could still cast their votes for the person (s) who had withdrawn candidacy.

## **2.9 Caretaker government**

During the care taker period (between the dissolution of the legislature and formation of next government), no announcement of new project approvals by Government officials, including care taker ministers other than normal publicity about ongoing development projects.

## **2.10 Audit of electoral rolls**

We support and endorse suggestions by the PSC's to audit the existing electoral rolls immediately because the next General Election must be held before the present tenure of government expires sometime in 2013.

We also support and endorse the PSC's recommendation that a Royal Commission of Enquiry be formed to look into the countless allegations of illegal immigrants afforded voting rights in Sabah, possibly occurring in Sarawak too.

## **2.11 Open air rallies in addition to ceramahs**

These should be allowed in the spirit of the right of assembly and freedom of expression as provided for in the relevant provisions of the Federal Constitution.

## **2.12 Money politics**

The law governing the maximum expenditure of a candidate in an election should be audited by professional auditors; enforcement of the law in cases of its violation be strictly enforced. Maybe an example or two of such cases brought to court would discourage manipulation of election expenses incurred by candidates.

## 2.13 Access to media by Opposition parties

In the past, top leaders of parties contesting elections in Sarawak were given air <sup>time</sup> to address supporters through the medium of the Radio. Why can't it be done again?

(no)

## 3 CONCLUSION

It is our hope and prayer that the above views of the Association be given due consideration by the Parliamentary Select Committee, in particular the proposals to introduce automatic voter registration, compulsory voting and local government elections.

It is considered opinion that in order for Malaysia to be classified as a full fledged democratic country. the electoral system must be overhauled with the inclusion of the above proposals and the endorsement of proposals relating to the formation of the Royal Commission of Enquiry to find out the truth or otherwise of allegations of illegal immigrants having rights to vote in Malaysian elections when the millions of eligible Malaysian citizens here and abroad are being deprived of the human rights to vote for the representative to parliament of their choice and preference.

Memorandum signed by the Chairman of Sarawak Dayak Iban Association on behalf of the members and supporters of SADIA.

  
Sidi Munan

## GERRYMANDERING

The Parliamentary constituency of P 212 Sibü consists of three (3) State constituencies of N. 47 Bawang Assan, N. 48 Pelawan and N. 49 Nangka.

1. In the state constituency of Bawang Assan there are thirteen (13) Polling Districts including one called Penasu (Polling District)
2. Within the Penasu Polling District, there are 32 Localities including (004) Rh Banta Sg Aup and (015) Rh Jonathan Juna Sg Aup.
3. The so called (004) Rh Banta in the electoral roll is actually referred to as Rh. Palugan in the Sarawak Electoral Map (Pelan Bahagian-Bahagian Pilihan Raya Parlimen dan Negeri Sarawak). For clearer version please refer to Peta B of the said map.
4. Likewise, the so called (015) Rh Jonathan Juna Sg Aup in the electoral roll is actually referred to as Rh. Nyala in the Sarawak Electoral Map (Pelan Bahagian-Bahagian Pilihan Raya Parlimen dan Negeri Sarawak). For clearer version please refer to Peta B of the said map.
5. The Polling centre where voters from Rh Banta and Rh Jonathan Juna cast their votes is SRK Sg Aup.
6. Physically, (004) Rh Banta Sg Aup, (015) Rh Jonathan Juna Sg Aup as well as the Polling Centre SRK Sg Aup is situated well within the State constituency of N.49 Nangka and NOT Bawang Assan State Constituency.
7. As if the above is not insulting enough, the boundary of Nangka State constituency in its effort to connect to a settlement situated east of N. 48 Pelawan has to connect itself through the locality of Rh Jonathan Juna, Rh Banta as well as a polling centre for the N. 47 Bawang Assan State Seat (Penasu Polling District), SRK Sg Aup
8. Gerrymandering in this case was so obvious in favour of one racial group. So a new state constituency should be created to give the Ibans here a fair representation by revisiting the 1969 boundaries.

Attached:

- i. Senarai Lokaliti (tempat kediaman) of Penasu Polling District
- ii. PETA B (Pelan Bahagian-Bahagian Pilihan Raya Parlimen dan Negeri Sarawak)



SENARAI LOKALITI (TEMPAT KEDIAMAN)

DAERAH MENGUNDI : 212/47/02 PENASU

(UNIT PENDAFTARAN)

BAHAGIAN PILIHAN RAYA PARLIMEN : P. 212 SIBU

BAHAGIAN PILIHAN RAYA NEGERI : N. 47 BAWANG ASSAN

JUMLAH PEMILIH : 1906

KOD		BILANGAN	MUKA
LOKALITI	NAMA LOKALITI	PEMILIH	SURAT

PEMILIH BIASA

001	RH DIEO	87	1
002	RH JANGGU RTU PANJANG BTG IGAN	72	3
003	RH DANIEL PENASU	79	5
004	RH BANTA SG AUP	122	7
005	RH JELANI ENKALAT BTG IGAN	51	10
006	RH GURI RTU PANJANG BTG IGAN	8	12
007	HUA SENG SAWMILL PENASU	6	13
008	RH RANDY	68	14
009	RH JETAN PENASU	1	16
010	RH HENRY EROKE	96	17
011	RH LUMJU TLK PENASU BTG IGAN	26	19
012	RH NYANAU RTU PANJANG	119	20
013	RH MATHEW RTU PANJANG BTG IGAN	87	23
014	RH STANLEY ENKALAT	161	25
015	RH JONATHAN JUNA SG AUP	220	29
016	RH NYUA TG KIBONG	5	34
017	TG PENASU BTG IGAN	23	35
018	PENASU	10	36
019	RUMAH JALAK PENASU	116	37
020	RANTAU PANJANG PENASU	22	40
021	RH JELUING BATU BORAK	47	41
022	TELOK BANGO BTG IGAN	26	42
023	RH MARGARETBAYOH PENASU BTG IGAN	44	43
024	RH MANGAI	39	44
025	YU LING SAWMILL	3	45
026	RH LADAI	16	46
027	RH ANCHUM RTU PANJANG	44	47
028	RH. MARIKAN	104	48
029	RH ANCHUM	9	51
030	RH AKONG TG PENASU	94	52
031	RH GAMANG PENASU	28	54
032	RH BANGIT PENASU	73	55