

Submission to the

Parliamentary Select Committee
on Electoral Reform

by

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Introduction

From the outset, we wish to clarify that Aliran is a member of the Bersih 2.0 coalition and one of our Exco member sits in its Steering Committee. In this regard we fully endorse the Eight Demands of the Coalition to usher in free, fair and clean elections in Malaysia. We support Bersih 2.0's call that these Demands should be addressed before the next elections are held. We have also gone through Bersih 2.0's submission to the Select Committee and fully support its recommendations.

For Aliran, elections in Malaysia have been conducted generally free although there have occurred instances when voters have complained that they were denied their right to vote on polling day because their names had been removed from the rolls, or that they had been transferred to other polling stations or districts without their awareness. In the last election there were also allegations that some had not had the opportunity to vote because the stations had not remained open long enough for people to cast their votes. However, there have rarely occurred instances when ballots boxes have gone missing or that large numbers of people have been prevented from voting.

Towards Fairness and a Level Playing Field

That said, there remains a major problem with Malaysian elections: they have not been conducted fairly or cleanly. Malaysians are well aware of the non-level playing field that characterises our electoral process. As elections approach, we see clearly the Barisan Nasional (BN)'s near monopoly and manipulation of the mainstream media, its access to and abuse of federal government facilities and funds, and its possession of huge electoral war chests, which allow the BN component parties to outspend its challengers.

In this submission, we like to highlight some of these instances of unfairness as they relate to the so-called 3-Ms (media, money and machinery). We shall offer some recommendations on how these can be overcome.

A related problem of unfairness is how these votes are translated into seats. We shall not elaborate on this aspect of unfairness except to emphasise that we agree with the points raised in Bersih 2.0's memorandum submitted to the Parliamentary Select Committee. Clearly, if the principle of one-person one-vote is to be maintained, the electoral constituencies must be apportioned among the 13 states according to the population size of the various states.

Subsequently, the total number of seats within each state should be delineated such that the disparity among constituencies be not more than 15% from the average constituency size as recommended by the Reid Commission and which was apparently followed by the first head of the SPR in 1959, prior to the introduction of the Constitutional Amendment of 1962, which also introduced Schedule 13 which, among others, restored the 2:1 weightage given to rural constituencies, before its removal altogether in the 1973 Constitutional Amendment. We believe that this point has been well made by Bersih 2.0 and by others. It remains for Parliament to have the political will to put this matter right and to ensure fairness in the translation of votes into seats.

Pending this major exercise, we therefore highlight the following issues of unfairness.

1. Reforming the Election Commission (SPR)

In the original *Merdeka* Constitution, an impartial Election Commission was put into place. Since then, various Constitutional amendments have transformed the SPR into a shell of its original self. Below we list these amendments and some other developments that have compromised the impartiality and autonomy of the SPR.

- The Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1960 amended Article 114 (4) to provide for the removal from the SPR of any member who 'engages in any paid office or employment outside the duties of his office'. According to various academic studies, this amendment was an attempt to remove the then chairman of the SPR, who had displayed much independence and was non-partisan in conducting the division of constituencies for the 1959 election and then, after the 1959 election, the re-delineation of constituencies in accordance with the new constitutional provisions (which among other things required that the disparity among constituencies be not more than 15% from the average constituency size). His removal failed.
- The Constitution Amendment Act of 1962 was yet another attempt to remove the chairman but it also increased the government's powers of control over the SPR by empowering parliament to determine the terms of office of the SPR. More importantly, the constituencies earlier delineated by the SPR were annulled by the Act thereby retaining the 1959 constituencies. The method of apportioning constituencies among states then in use was also repealed.

The new 13th Schedule was added to the Constitution with two important consequences. First, the pre-independence 2:1 rural weightage (lowered to within 15 percent of the average constituency as recommended by the Reid Commission) was restored. Second, power to determine constituencies was transferred from the SPR to Parliament, effectively the party in power. Henceforth the SPR would only delineate and recommend new constituencies to the prime minister who would then table it in parliament where only a simple majority sufficed.

More than that, the PM could also make revisions to the recommendations "after such consultation with the SPR as he may consider necessary", before (re)submitting them to Parliament.

- The Constitutional Amendment Act (No 2) of 1973 removed the power of the SPR to apportion constituencies among the various states. Both the number of constituencies and its apportionment among the various states are now specified in the Constitution (Art 46) and thus amendable at any time provided it receives a two-thirds' majority support in Parliament.

The Act further replaced the 1962 requirement contained in 2c of the 13th Schedule, with respect to the 2:1 variation in the size of constituencies, with the new stipulation that "a measure of weightage ought to be given to such (i.e. rural) constituencies". This new wording remains till today allowing for rural weightage but without clearly limiting it.

- The Constitution (Amendment) (No.2) Act of 1984 removed the upper 10-year limit for constituency reviews. Thus reviews do not need to be conducted even after 10 years. More importantly, a new clause to Article 113 provides for the review of any

affected area by the SPR whenever there is a change in the number of seats in parliament or any state assembly. This means that the party in power can effect a change in the constituencies at any time and for any portion of the Federation or any state by merely varying the number of seats in the *Dewan Rakyat*, or those of a state assembly.

The clause further absolves all such reviews from strict compliance with the principles of constituency delineation contained in the 13th Schedule. These latest amendments give the ruling coalition much flexibility in reviewing constituencies. Other than the SPR initiating a review after eight years, the government of the day can change the number of seats in parliament or the state under its control, and then call the SPR to conduct a review. And this can be done without adhering to the rules binding normal reviews.

In effect, the ruling coalition has assumed effective control over constituency delineation as well. The review can be conducted earlier than eight years since the last review. There are no longer clear limits to rural weightage. And all reviews are subjected to the PM's amendment before being submitted to parliament for a simple majority approval. Under the circumstances, the rules of constituency delineation are henceforth largely nominal in nature, lending legitimacy to the wishes of the ruling coalition.

In 2002, following the prime minister's announcement that Putrajaya would have its own member of parliament, a motion was passed in the Parliament to create a new Putrajaya parliamentary constituency after which the SPR delineated the electoral boundaries for Putrajaya as well as re-delineated the boundaries for the surrounding areas affected by this move. In fact, just prior to the 2004 elections, a new set of parliamentary seats were created by the SPR.

To enhance democracy in Malaysia, there is an urgent need to enhance the autonomy and independence of the SPR, as well as to strengthen its ability to monitor electoral financing. In this regard we propose that we revisit the selection of SPR members to ensure that the members of the SPR are of high quality and are representative of our society. Such quality and representativeness will enhance the credibility of the SPR.

Recommendation

Accordingly, we propose the establishment of a Selection Committee that involves all the three branches of government – the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary – as well as civil society groups.

We also propose that the membership of the SPR should include representatives from the three branches of government as well as from civil society. The chairperson of SPR should also be an individual of impeccable character enjoying the confidence of the public at all times. Under the circumstances, it would be preferred that a member of the Judiciary is appointed to head the SPR. (This is the practice in South Korea and in other democratic countries).

We further propose that at least one member of the SPR be a person who is well versed in financial matters so that the SPR can look into the matter of electoral financing after the elections.

2. Free, fair and equal access to the media

Introduction – Media, society and democracy

Democracy entails the freedom of citizens to express their views in the public domain. It provides them the opportunity to exercise the right to engage in discussions or debates, and to offer criticisms that collectively contribute to the common good of a society. This public dialogue is crucial to the notion of citizens partaking of a decision-making process in a thriving democracy. It is in this context that the role of the mass media becomes prominent because they are expected to provide the necessary platform for public discourse. But, in order for citizens to express themselves adequately, it is important that they all have easy and equal access to the supposedly free and responsible media.

The role of the mass media in society becomes all the more crucial and urgent when general elections emerge. This is because the media, if free and fair, would bring about a situation where the voters can make an informed choice as regards the contending candidates in the general elections. The electorate would be able to get sufficient information pertaining to the competing candidates and political parties particularly from a fair and independent media. However, as we all know, the mainstream media in Malaysia are not fair and independent to start with. This has got to do with the laws governing the media as well as the ownership and control of the media.

The state of the Malaysian mainstream media

The restrictive laws that govern the media are principally the Printing Presses and Publications Act (1984) and the Communications and Multimedia Act (1998). These are laws that help shape the print and electronic media in the country so that those who own the mainstream newspapers, television and radio stations are closely aligned to the ruling party, and in turn are inclined to be BN-friendly.

Although there are many newspapers, radio and TV stations in the country, they are however owned by a select few, namely Media Prima, Huaren Holdings and Utusan Melayu group, among others, all of which are BN-friendly.

The lopsidedness of the ownership and control of the mainstream media that often injures the democratization process in Malaysia because the Opposition invariably gets little, if at all, access to the mainstream media. Worse, the past general elections witnessed the demonization of the Opposition by these media.

The media and general elections – case studies of 1990, 1999 and 2004

In the 1990 general elections, for instance, the news reports highlighted mainly the activities of the incumbent party, apart from putting the Opposition in a negative light. The Opposition had difficulty to even buy advertising space in the mainstream newspapers as a means of imparting their views and policies to the general public.

TV commentaries and talk shows were basically a convenient platform to only promote a positive image of the incumbent BN.

In the case of radio, RTM allocated 13-minute radio airtime for the major political parties, including the Opposition, to make their political party broadcasts. The political scripts, however, were scrutinised by the radio stations 24 hours before broadcast. Additionally, these party broadcasts were not advertised beforehand, thus reducing the impact of these broadcasts.

The performance of the mass media in the 1999 general elections was generally similar to that of the 1990's. In fact, the mainstream media were expected to play a major role to woo the disenchanted electorate in the wake of the Reformasi movement of the period. A lot of press coverage was given to the BN and its leaders who collectively were portrayed as being caring towards the people. In contrast, the Opposition was painted as a disunited collective that was not to be trusted by the general public.

In the 2004 general elections, the mainstream media were similarly biased towards the incumbent BN and unfriendly to the Opposition. The coverage of the media centred around the supposedly 'affable Pak Lah'.

Recommendations

Unfair treatment of the opposition parties. - Both the print and electronic media must adhere to their professional code of ethics, particularly to provide free and fair access to all parties.

Media distortions of the Opposition - Equally important, the media must shy away from the practice of demonizing the Opposition through their news reports, opinion columns, documentaries and letters to the editor.

No right of reply to the parties maligned - To be fair, the media must accord the right to reply to the parties who have been criticized or condemned.

Political advertisements that are confined to the incumbent party - The media must provide equal opportunity for the parties concerned to advertise themselves and their political manifestos etc. There has to be an agreed ceiling to the amount of political advertisements that can be bought by the parties concerned.

3. Election Financing

It is well known that some candidates and political parties spend considerably more funds than others during the electoral campaign period. Invariably, those who spend more money develop an advantage. Left on its own, the excessive use of resources by particular individuals and parties can lead to the distortion of our electoral process, nullifying the principle of one-person, one-vote and compromising our electoral system.

As it stands, section 19 of the Election Offences Act imposes spending limits only for the candidates (up to RM100,000 for a state seat; up to RM200,000 for a parliamentary seat). In fact, the candidates spend much more. The opposition estimated that the Barisan Nasional candidate spent some RM1.14 million in nine-days of campaigning for the Indera Kayangan constituency in 2002. The expenditure included: two million plastic party flags, 50 billboards, 6,000 banners, 2,000 T-shirts with the BN logo, 10 days of banquet dinners and lodging for 1,000 party workers. Apart from this some RM25 million worth of development and town planning projects such as low-cost houses schemes, were also promised (*Aliran Monthly* vol 22 no3, p. 7). This was clearly beyond the limit allowed. Yet no action was taken against the winning BN candidate. Nor did the SPR express any comment on the matter.

As the law stands, the candidates are only obliged to file reports on their electoral expenses after the elections, but only as individuals. There is no provision requiring that the financial support provided to the candidates by their political parties (in the form of electoral paraphernalia, banners and pamphlets) be included in the accounting. The Law is also silent on 'other donors' (whether private businessmen or private companies or organizations), who donate cash or in kind (for instance, by paying for a dinner or publishing an advertisement in the newspaper, or putting up a series of billboards along the North-South Highway) in support of a particular candidate or political party.

Indeed, the SPR considers the realm of electoral financing to be outside of the scope of its ambit. Indeed, apart from requiring that the elected representatives submit returns on election spending, there is no requirement that these accounts must first be audited independently. As well the SPR does not scrutinise in order to verify the accuracy of these accounts. It is the burden of the aggrieved political party or voter to scrutinise and verify these accounts should they deem it necessary.

Recommendations

We propose that the election expenses of all candidates and all political parties must be independently audited by certified auditors before submission to the SPR.

The SPR, then, must scrutinise the reporting of election financing and ensure that they do not exceed the upper limits allowed.

The capacity of the SPR to verify the reporting of election financing should also be built up. This should be an on-going process and should be given serious attention after the elections have been held.

4. Establish a Caretaker Government, Stop Misuse of Government Machinery, Services and Funds during Elections

The exploitation of government resources and machinery by the ruling party during the election period undermines the fairness of the election process, hence rendering the election process meaningless. Yet, it is commonplace for the incumbent BN government to resort to 'projek kilat' or on the spot grants during the campaign period. These range from: tarring roads and repairing schools and drains; providing street lights and building new toilets; etc.

In Sabah and Sarawak, it is not uncommon to witness the distribution of water tanks and electric generators to rural communities, bicycles to school children, and motorboat engines, etc. It is also very common at times of by-elections as in the cases of the Sibuluan and Ijok seats recently, and in the case of Lunas and Permatang Pauh earlier.

Sometimes, new developments projects (even the establishment of a college or university) are also launched during the campaign period.

Even more commonly, there is mis-use of government resources (vehicles, government premises including balai rakyat, officials, etc.) by the incumbent during the election period.

To ensure that the ruling party does not exploit government resources and machinery to win elections, some countries Like Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands and Bangladesh provide for a neutral caretaker government that operates in the interim period between the dissolution of parliament for the purpose of holding an election and the formation of a new government after the election results are known.

Recommendation:

Accordingly, Aliran proposes that we, too, make provision for the establishment of Caretaker governments with the following guideline.

1. The caretaker period begins at the time the Parliament or State Legislative Assembly is dissolved and continues until the election result is clear or, if there is a change of government, until the new government is appointed.
2. During the caretaker period, the business of government continues and ordinary matters of administration still need to be addressed. However, the caretaker government should follow a code of conduct (see point no.4) which ensures that their actions do not erode the integrity of the election process; does not bind an incoming government nor limit its freedom of action.
3. Code of conduct that ought to be followed by a caretaker government
 - a. **No Major policy decisions** – Governments must avoid making major policy decisions during the caretaker period that are likely to influence voters. Whether a particular policy decision qualifies as 'major' is a matter for judgment. Relevant considerations include not only the significance of the decision in terms of policy and resources, but also whether the decision is a matter of contention between the Government and Opposition in the election campaign.

- b. **No Significant New Appointments** - Governments must defer making significant appointments during the caretaker period. When considering the advice it would give on whether an appointment qualifies as 'significant', the agency should consider not only the importance of the position, but also whether the proposed appointment would be likely to be controversial and an issue in the election campaign.
- c. **No Major New Contracts** - Governments must avoid entering into major contracts or undertakings during the caretaker period. When considering whether a contract or undertaking qualifies as 'major', agencies should consider the dollar value of the commitment and also whether the commitment involves a routine matter of administration or rather implements or entrenches a policy, program or administrative structure which is politically contentious.
- d. **No Use of Government resources to support Ruling party** - A caretaker government should not use its resources or position to support the ruling party during the election campaign. During the caretaker period, agency provision of entitlements for Ministers and their staff should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Agencies should not cover claims relating to the election campaign or a political event, as these costs are to be borne by the respective political party.

The Election Commission should make sure that caretaker governments adhere to the code of conduct, failing which the affected electoral contest should be declared null and void.

5. Make Constituency Development Funds available to All

In between elections, the BN's elected representatives have access to the so-called 'Constituency Development Funds' (CDF) to finance their favoured minor capital works projects and/or to sponsor programmes of particular schools, associations, religious organizations, residential communities, etc.

In our research we have learnt that the CDF amounted to RM300,000 per year in the case of the MP, RM140,000 a year in the case of each assemblyman in Penang, in 1997. As the 1999 elections approached, the allocation for the MPs was increased to RM400,000. The Chief Minister and other members of the State Exco, by virtue of the positions held, were entitled to more. The allocation was usually broken down into two 'votes': one for roads, drains and other minor public works projects; the other for the maintenance and upkeep of schools and other requests. Just before the 2008 general election, each BN MP was granted RM600,000 for their respective constituencies, and this they spent within three months.

These funds were managed by the State Development Office (SDO). When the *wakil rakyat* recommended a particular project, the SDO would usually approve an allocation for the project which would then be forwarded to the JKR (or public works department) which would carry out the project or contract it out to the private sector. It is noteworthy that such funds were *not* made available to elected *wakil rakyat* belonging to the opposition parties, an important reason. It was the CDF which facilitated the running of the BN service centre. Consequently, although the opposition *wakil rakyat* might recommend a particular project, it was not unlikely that it would be rejected unless the circumstances were compelling.

Following GE12, so-called 'BN co-ordinators' have been appointed to those constituencies which fell into the hands of the Opposition. Although these co-ordinators are unelected, they have access, via the SDO, to such CDF. This is most unethical and extremely unfair.

Unfortunately, after the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) came to power in several states following GE12, they, too, have adopted a similar discriminatory policy vis-à-vis the elected BN state legislative assemblymen (SLAs). Whereas the PR SLAs have access to CDFs at the state level, the BN SLAs do not. Two wrongs do not make a right!

Recommendation

To enhance democracy and the meaning of the Malaysian electoral system, Aliran calls upon the federal and all state governments to be fair and to make available CDFs to all elected MPs and SLAs, regardless of their party affiliation. This must be a right given to all *wakil rakyat*. Accordingly, Aliran calls upon the federal government to stop the practice of allowing so-called 'BN coordinators' of having access to the CDF. As unelected politicians, they have no right whatsoever to decide on how the rakyat's money ought to be spent.

6. Fixed dates for elections

Elections should not be a cat and mouse game. It should never be a guessing game either. There should be a definite predetermined date that is publicly disclosed so that everyone knows the date of the next general elections

This is practised by a number of countries which have a fixed date for the election. Among them are Norway and Switzerland with invariable fixed dates. Canada and its provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Northwest Territories) have implemented fixed-term elections too. In the United Kingdom the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 fixes the General Election on the first Thursday in May every five years. Elections to the European Parliament occur every five years in June. Presidential elections in the United States occur every four years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November. Germany, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) have semi-fixed terms in that dissolution at any time in mid-term is allowed only to resolve serious deadlock.

It is noted that "Predetermined or fixed election dates have the advantage of fairness and predictability." Though the BN may not be in favour of this as - under the present practice - it can surprise the Opposition by calling for a snap election when the circumstances are favourable for it, nevertheless the BN must be realistic and see the advantage in this when it becomes the Opposition after the 13th GE!

Too much time and money is wasted in trying to create a favourable situation to call for an election. The recent budget is a good example of how the voters are being bribed for the BN's benefit. Households earning less than RM3000 were in no better position in 2009, 2010 and 2011 but this is being attended to only in 2012 just before the 13th GE! The RM500 may assist them in January but does their hardship disappear after that? What about the next 11 months? If this was a long-term solution for the whole of this year and the years after that, then there is no ground to accuse the BN of bribing the voters!

Recommendation

We recommend fixed dates for elections.

7. No party hopping

We do not have an anti-party hopping law. Such a law is necessary so that the voters mandate is not frustrated and violated.

A successful independent candidate has no obligation to any party and subsequently he can join any party of his choice. But it is different when it comes to a candidate nominated by a party. He is elected based on the party's stature and manifesto.

A candidate after being elected on a particular party ticket has no right to switch party. It is clearly a blatant betrayal of the voters' mandate. When this takes place, the seat should automatically fall vacant forcing a by-election.

It cannot be argued that a party candidate has the right of association when he switches party after being elected.

The argument that it infringes on the right of association does not hold water. An elected member can switch his party affiliation any time he wants - that right is not challenged. But when he betrays the voters and makes a mockery of the democratic process there must be a consequence.

He can become a member of any political party he chooses to be but he has no right to cling on to his elected position because he was elected on a different party platform.

An elected representative who switches party should be allowed to contest in the by-election when his seat falls vacant. And if he gets elected once again, then his position is legitimised and he can stay on as an elected representative honourably.

Recommendation

An anti-party hopping law must be enacted to protect the peoples' mandate and sanctify the democratic electoral process.

8. Automatic registration

Registration of voters should be automatic. All we need is the political will to make this possible. The Election Commission's (EC) computer system should be linked to the National Registration Department (NRD).

All Malaysians are required to renew their ICs on reaching the age of 21. It is at this stage that there should be a link with the NRD so that all Malaysians reaching the age of 21 are automatically registered.

The address on the new IC will determine their constituency for voting purposes. The current practice of submitting forms to the EC to seek registration as a voter is slow, cumbersome and prone to mistakes. Those who don't submit such forms are left out from the electoral roll, thereby forfeiting their right to vote.

All eligible voters will be on the electoral roll when registration is automatic and there will be hardly any mistake with regard to their particulars. By linking the EC's computer system with the NRD, it is possible to be up to date especially when deaths are reported to the NRD. The names of the deceased can be correctly removed. The names of the dead will be automatically removed in this way.

Recommendation

The EC's computer system must be linked to the NRD so that all eligible voters are registered.

9. Compulsory voting

We do not have compulsory voting in Malaysia. Our close neighbour Singapore has made voting compulsory.

Non-notification with regard to change of address can be solved through this system. People seeking jobs or settling elsewhere after their automatic registration, must notify the change of address. When voting is made compulsory, those concerned will be forced to be responsible and provide their new address, failing which they will have to travel to their previous address to cast their vote.

The advantages of compulsory registration is that there will be greater participation by Malaysians to make the democratic process meaningful. Greater participation of the majority of the population enhances our democratic process and compels the candidates to address the needs of all rather than confine themselves to certain groups who form the majority in that constituency.

Recommendations

- Relevant laws must be amended or introduced to make voting compulsory.

10. Granting of Citizenship and the Electoral Rolls

Many complaints have arisen in connection with voter registration. Some of these touch upon the issue of foreign nationals being fast-tracked for citizenship in this country with a right to vote in the anticipated 13th General Elections. Granting citizenship to foreign nationals permanently resident in the country is legally acceptable and normal in most countries, including Malaysia.

However, seems to be a sudden move by the National Registration Department to register permanent residents holding red ICs (Identity Cards) and allegedly foreign nationals who may be resident in Malaysia for a short time or are ineligible for citizenship or permanent residence to be registered as citizens. Opposition party members also claim that the granting of blue ICs to red IC holders was done within a few hours in one day.

There are also allegations that the 6P registration exercise of 'undocumented' migrants in this country has been abused, with some foreign nationals requested to sign an oath to vote for the ruling party in exchange for citizenship of this country.

Adding to this controversy, was an announcement allegedly by the Bangladeshi Government that Malaysia agreed to grant citizenship to Bangladeshi citizens currently in Malaysia. In 1937, a similar deal was made between the Government in India and the Malayan Colonial Administration. Migration is also a known strategy to combat poverty in less developed countries.

Governments can legitimately take the above measures in regulating migration into the country, but any fast-tracked grant of citizenship is inappropriate at a time close to holding a general election. The sudden jump in the number of eligible voters in the country without a properly scrutinised and monitored electoral roll throws suspicion on the motives of the government in granting citizenship to PR's in Malaysia and possibly newer migrants in the country.

The electoral roll is still plagued with serious errors and there seems to be no sensible method to distinguish the authenticity of the current supplementary electoral rolls by any citizen or political party.

The fundamental cause of this confusion and allegations of malpractice still under investigation by various parties, including the government, is the lack of a comprehensive and proper immigration system. Laws need to be updated to cater for some of the current categories of migrants i.e. migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees.

Despite the on-going registration for biometric data collection, it is still too early to identify specific groups of migrants or permanent residents eligible for Malaysian citizenship. No proper transparent system of identification and processing of citizenship applications exists yet.

Recommendations

- Granting citizenship should be immediately terminated in the run-up to the general election.

- The 'new citizens' should not be permitted an immediate right to vote in the pending general elections. They can be eligible to vote in subsequent general elections.
- A proper and transparent Immigration and Citizenship application processing system be set up.
- Police and Armed Forces personnel with non-civilian IC numbers should use only this identification number for their voter registration unless they have left the armed forces or police service. However, the NRD should maintain a record of their civilian IC numbers.