

S'wak Emergency extension appropriate in view of pandemic, say political analysts

KUCHING: The Yang di-Pertuan Agong's proclamation for Sarawak to remain under a state of Emergency until Feb 2, 2022 is the most appropriate action in view of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, said Prof Dr Jayum Jawan.

The Universiti Putra Malaysia political scientist said with the six-month emergency extension, the Election Commission (EC) must now come up with innovative ways to conduct the state election under the new normal.

"It falls upon the EC to come out with new, innovative ways on how this exercise, i.e. general or state elections, should be carried out and at the same time to ensure that the safety of all concerned are protected," he told The Borneo Post yesterday.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong has proclaimed a six-month Emergency extension in Sarawak from Aug 2 to Feb 2, 2022 in view of the pandemic and as such, suspended the state election until the Emergency is lifted.

Jayum said the EC, however, should have by now found new ways to conduct elections under the new normal given that the



Prof Dr Jayum
Jawan

pandemic has been going on for more than a year.

"The experience from that Sabah state election should have taught them some things. If they cannot come up with the (new) ideas, then the EC members have failed in their duties entrusted by the King and the people," he added.

Meanwhile, Universiti Malaya socio-political analyst Assoc Prof Awang Azman Awang Pawi said the Emergency extension will enable the Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) government to focus on better handling the pandemic.

"At the same time, they will also be able to provide more assistance and the best service during this six-month period as



Assoc Prof
Awang Azman
Awang Pawi

the ruling government.

"When the government has successfully ensured that a 'herd immunity' has been achieved and that there is a sense of security among the people, then the GPS government will attain higher popularity to acquire the new mandate in the State election," he said.

He also said that the extension can serve as an opportunity for the opposition to settle matters pertaining to seat allocation.

"By doing so, opposition parties namely DAP, PKR, PSB, and Parti Bumi Kenyalang can avoid multi-cornered fights during the election.

"If this is not solved, the chance for the opposition to win more seats will fail," he said.