

02 NOV 2002

Mahathir-voters

DR MAHATHIR: SOME 2.8 MILLION VOTERS RELOCATED TO OTHER CONSTITUENCIES

PENANG, Nov 2 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad disclosed today that some 2.8 million registered voters have had their names relocated by certain parties to constituencies of which they have nothing to do with them.

The Prime Minister said a thorough examination of the electoral roll revealed that these voters did not have the address in these constituencies.

He said that obviously this had been going on for a long time, probably over the past 30 years.

"That is why the number of registered voters is big, voters who are not from the constituency and voters with the address different from that stated in their identity cards," he told reporters after presenting his keynote address at the state-level Barisan Nasional (BN) convention at the Balik Pulau Sports Complex, here.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment on the disclosure by Penang Umno deputy chief Datuk Dr Hilmi Yahaya that some 500 unknown voters had been registered in Telok Bahang constituency while the names of 700 voters in the constituency had been relocated to other constituencies.

Dr Hilmi said these 500 voters would probably vote against the BN in an election while the 700 voters whose names were removed from the constituency were loyal supporters of the party concerned.

Describing such act as the biggest deceit by certain parties including the opposition, Dr Mahathir said that by right the registration of voters should be based on address stated in their identity cards or place of work or place where they have properties.

Citing his case as an example, he said that although he lives and works in Putrajaya, he still votes in Titi Gajah, Kedah because he hails from there and has a house there.

He said transferring the name of voters to constituencies having nothing to do with them and without their knowledge would create problems for them on polling days.

Dr Mahathir said the opposition parties would move their supporters from a constituency where they have no chance of winning to one with a marginal chance.

"At the same time, in a constituency where they had lost narrowly previously and without the knowledge of the voters concerned, transfer the names of these voters to another constituency. For example, if there are Chinese voters in the constituency concerned, they will move them to another constituency to deny victory to the BN," he said.

He said these had been going on in constituencies controlled by the opposition and also in Kedah, including in his own parliamentary constituency of Kubang Pasu.

"In my constituency, 2,000 voters are gone and they are not my supporters. They move to a nearby constituency," he said.

Asked whether this could be the work of insiders in the Election Commission, he said: "Maybe."

He said a study would be made to draw up punishments that could be taken against such people.

-- BERNAMA

ZU SA ABG