

'Stealthy EC rule changes hampering voter registration'

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By Hazlan Zakaria

The DAP today questioned the "sudden changes" in rules for voter registration by the Federal Territory Election Commission (EC), describing this as "unreasonable" and a hindrance to its efforts to register new voters.

The most recent rule change, without notice, led to the rejection of more than 500 new voters by the the Federal Territory EC because their forms were not accompanied with copies of their identity cards.

NONE "This is very unreasonable," said Seputeh MP Teresa Kok (right), who explained at a press conference at Parliament House today that it would be difficult for them to follow up with all the 500 registrants to chase for copies of their identity cards.

Forcing them to do that is unfair, said Segambut MP Lim Lip Eng, who joined Kok at the press conference.

"Our job was to help get those who want to register as voters fill in the forms for the EC. Verification and getting the voters' credentials is their job, not ours," he said.

The need for a copy of the MyKad was never a requirement before, said DAP leaders, adding that this sudden rule change "is an ambush by the commission" as it was the fourth in the last six months and done without prior notice.

tan kok wai dap pc 010808 01 "There was no prior notice," said Cheras MP Tan Kok Wai (left), who was also at the press conference.

As the party often opened its registration booths in many places other than its service centres, the leaders argued that requiring them to attach a copy of the MyKad for each person registering as a voter would require them to lug around a photostat machine, which would make the job of their volunteers all the more difficult.

Earlier, the EC had sent back forms submitted by the DAP, asking for a statement to be attached to each form, a time-consuming process that had to be repeated for each registrant.

Later, Tan explained, the party was told that the EC had changed its voter registration form, which forced party volunteers to fill up the forms all over again - which was further hindered by the smaller columns in the new forms.

The latest rejected batch was sent after complying with all the previous requirements, only to be rejected out of hand for another unannounced rule change.