

Human error excuse not acceptable, NGO tells EC
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By Salhan K Ahmad

Tindak Malaysia, the latest electoral reform group, today blasted the Election Commission (EC) for repeatedly using "human error" as an excuse to explain the mistakes in electoral roll.

"For such an important document as the electoral roll, which can determine the outcome of a general election, it is expected that all entries be double-checked and approved by a more senior officer.

NONE"On top of that, the computer system handling such entries should have picked up such simple errors.

"If not, the programme should be discarded and the software company supplying it should be sued for negligence, if it can be proven that the programme is at fault," Tindak Malaysia founder Wong Piang Yow (right) said in a statement today.

Wong was responding to a report published by news portal Free Malaysia Today, quoting EC deputy chairperson Wan Ahmad Wan Omar as saying that the errors in the electoral roll are due to "human error".

'Don't highlight the matter in the press'

Wan Ahmad was asked by the news portal about cases where the birthdays and the new MyKad numbers of the voters registered do not correspond.

He replied that temporary staff recruited to assist the EC could have made the mistakes when registering these new voters.

"Our officers in charge will register based on what has been declared. They have thousands of forms to fill everyday. As we don't do online registration, there may be human errors," he said.

kuala terengganu by election 120109 spr deputy chairman wan ahmad wan omarWan Ahmad (right in photo) urged all parties who have any issue with the electoral roll to approach the EC directly instead of confusing the public by highlighting the matter in the press.

Recently, the screen capture of a voter's status on the EC official website had gone viral on the Internet because his Mykad number (600128125531) did not tally with his date of birth (Oct 23, 1955).

The same voting status made a even bigger surprise this week when the voter's name was changed from Mohideen Ahmed to Alinjinin Bin Louis @ Hazwan B. Abdullah, with all other details remaining the same.

Malaysiakini has obtained both the screen captures from the EC's official website showing the change of voter's name in less than a week (See bottom images).

Heads must roll

In today's statement, Wong said the errors reportedly run into hundreds of thousands, hence it is no longer possible to brush it off as "human error".

"It is a systemic error on a massive scale and heads must roll," he stressed, adding that the competence, accountability and transparency of the EC has sunk to an abysmal level.

He reiterated the demands in the memorandum Tindak Malaysia submitted jointly with Bersih 2.0 to the parliamentary select committee on electoral reform on March 21.

Among others, they demanded that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak sets up two royal commissions of inquiry to investigate the granting of citizenship, and the preparation of electoral roll since 1985, respectively.

They also want future appointments of election commissioners to be drawn from civil society and for current or previous members of the civil service, government-linked companies and political parties to be excluded.

The present batch of voter registrars must also be replaced immediately, Tindak Malaysia and Bersih 2.0 demanded.

“Failure to clean up the electoral roll will clearly show Najib’s lack of political will to have a clean and fair election.

“Tindak Malaysia, therefore, urges all Malaysians to write to the EC to demand that the coming and future elections are conducted freely and fairly and under full transparency,” Wong added.

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