

3.3 million problematic voters in electoral roll

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There are 3.3 million cases of dubious voters in the electoral roll, claimed researcher Ong Kian Ming, a large chunk of which is made up of those voting in constituencies different from the addresses shown on their identification cards (MyKad).

NONEBased on a-decade-old data, Ong (left) said that there are 3.1 million voters who vote in constituencies that do not tally with the address stated on their MyKads.

“(This) is particularly troubling because this information was given to the Election Commission (EC) by the National Registration Department (NRD) in 2002,” said Ong at a press conference organised by the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih 2.0).

Ong, who is the director of the Malaysia Electoral Roll Analysis Project (Merap), said that he came into possession of the data almost 10 years ago as well. However, he managed to compile the additional information needed in one week.

In this preliminary analysis, it was found that the 10 initial problems identified in the electoral roll involved approximately 100,000 voters and that this number could easily rise to 400,000 upon further analysis,” he said.

Despite having had access to date, the EC said Ong had not checked on the glitches as a random sample of 100,000 out of 3.1 million still shows that there are voters who vote in constituencies not according to their addresses.

Foreigners registered as voters

The 3.1 million voters made up 37 percent of the electoral roll in 2002, which had a total of 8.3 million voters registered, said Ong.

After 2002, the EC had implemented a new system where those submitting new registration forms have to vote according to the constituency indicated in the address according to MyKad.

Another problem is the existence of 65,455 foreign nationals registered as voters in the electoral roll, said Ong, adding that 90 percent held MyKad indicating they are Malaysia-born.

“The data shows many are from Brunei, Cocos, the Philippines, Indonesia and Pakistan.

“Most of them were born before 1980s, which means they should have had the old identification card. But there was none,” he said referring to data he had compiled from his sources revealing the nationality of voters.

“Also troubling is the fact that 75 percent of these foreign voters can be found in Sabah.

“We are not able to ascertain whether they are Malaysians for real, but this raises doubt as the registration of these voters was done in the 1990s when the claims of an ongoing exercise - ‘Project IC’ - for immigrants in Sabah,” said Ong.

“It seems that EC failed to act on this information that was given by the NRD and to use this information to clean up the electoral roll even though the presence of non-resident voters contravened Article 119 (1)(b) of the Federal Constitution, which says that a voter must be a resident in the constituency in which

he or she is voting,” he added.

Ong’s research also found that 106,743 voters were deleted and 6,762 added to the electoral roll without public display, between the end of 2010 and the third quarter of 2011.

Important information missing

Ong also said the supplementary roll released in the fourth quarter by the EC to the political parties some important information “was missing” including information on the reasons for voters to be removed from the electoral roll such as death, enlisted in the army or police force, losing citizenship status.

“The failure of EC to take any action on these problematic cases, which total to 3.3 million, is an indication of how serious they are about tackling the deep rooted problems in the electoral roll.

“Whether there were problems which were created in the past or those problems which are still arising because of the abuses of the system,” he said.

NONE Bersih steering committee member Maria Chin Abdullah (right) hit out at the EC’s lackadaisical approach.

“They say they are cleaning it up, so why are such results emerging? This is why Bersih wants the EC team to resign and let a new team step in to clean up the roll,” she said.

Last week, EC chairperson Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof asserted that Malaysia’s electoral roll was the cleanest in the world with only 0.3 percent or about 42,000 doubtful voters out of the 12.6 million registered.

Countering the EC chief’s comment, Ong said the electoral roll is far from being the “cleanest in the world”.

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