

PAS queries why Palapes can be absentee voters

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By Aidila Razak

PAS vice-president Mahfuz Omar today sought an explanation from the Election Commission (EC) as to why Reserve Officers Training Unit (Palapes) members at public universities are allowed to become absentee voters.

He said that as at 1am today, he had found the names of 113 people who were registered under Palapes localities in the supplementary electoral roll for the first quarter of 2012 which is currently being displayed.

“I want the EC to explain why there exists a Palapes voting locality and why university students are registered under this locality, which allows them to be registered as absentee voters,” he said.

Speaking at a press conference at the PAS headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Mahfuz said this is even more suspect as many of them are registered with civilian identity cards.

“I can accept that the EC says those who have military identity cards are the trainers, but trainers do not reside on university campuses,” he said.

“They are only seconded for training purposes and should be registered to their specific camps, not under Palapes.”

Mahfuz, who said he was “surprised” to find there exists such a thing as a Palapes locality, and pointed out that a revision of the master roll found 497 people registered under Palapes localities.

The list provided to the media today shows those registered under the Palapes UTM (locality code 447), Palapes UUM (locality code 401), Palapes UPSI (locality code 400), Palapes Unimap (locality code 400), Palapes UKM (locality 401), Palapes Unimas (locality code 451) and Palapes UiTM Dungun (locality 401).

The parliamentary constituencies involved are Gelang Patah, Kubang Pasu, Tanjung Malim, Arau, Kota Samarahan, Serdang and Dungun.

Middle code conundrum

Mahfuz reiterated his concern over the naturalisation of foreigners for votes, which he claimed has arisen from the fact that tens of thousands of foreign-born citizens are on the electoral roll.

He said as at 1am today, 5,422 people on the supplementary roll were found to have identity card middle codes that indicate they are not born in any state in Malaysia.

“I have said this inside Parliament and outside Parliament and no one has sued me yet,” he said, referring to his previous claim that a high-level task force is working to naturalise foreigners for

votes.

Mahfuz said that in his memorandum to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, he had listed about 175,000 people in the master roll who are foreign born.

“EC data show that these people were born in places like Myanmar, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Nepal... Just how many Malaysians were born overseas?” he asked.

The National Registration Department (NRD) has explained that those with identity card middle codes that do not correspond to any Malaysian state were born overseas.

They were previously given the middle code 71, to denote that they were born overseas, but this practice was discontinued in 2000.

Since then, these citizens have been given middle codes to correspond with their country of birth - for example, those with the middle code of 66 were born in Singapore.

Of the 27 'suspect' codes revealed by Mahfuz today, only five are not listed on the NRD website, including 80, 18, 70 and 99.

However, there are several people on the list of 5,422 who were registered with a middle code other than 71, who were born decades before 2000. One of them was born in 1938.

Responding to *Malaysiakini*, NRD spokesperson Jainisah Mohd Noor said the codes which could not be found on the website also show the MyKad holders were born abroad.

However, these have been discontinued. Only the ones introduced in 2002 and which are listed on the website are in use.

She said the codes 80 and 99 were used for those born during flights or at sea, "including (those) born in Mecca".

She added that the code 70 was used in the same manner as the code 71, to denote that someone is born overseas.