

Election Commission explains 'recycled ICs' poser
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One month after a political researcher discovered incidents of 'recycled identity cards' in Sabah, the Election Commission (EC) has finally come forward with an explanation.

The confusion, said an EC information technology officer authorised to speak on the matter, arose because the two voters had the same old identity card (IC) number.

Last month, Malaysian Electoral Roll Analysis Project (Merap) director Ong Kian Ming (right) found cases of two voters having been deleted from the electoral roll after 'giving away' their old IC numbers.

Merap has been providing statistics and evidence on electoral irregularities to back demands of the electoral reform coalition Bersih.

The first voter is Badariah binti Zabdi (new IC number: 610911125540, old IC number H0509518) who was registered in Tawau in the 2008 general election electoral roll.

IC number changed, but birthdate retained

In the electoral roll for the third quarter of 2011, Badariah's new IC number was changed to 620112125842, but her date of birth in the EC records remained as that in her old IC number, which was Sept 11, 1961.

However the latest check of the EC online database showed that the IC number in question - 620112125842/H0509518 - now belongs to Norhayati binti Ismail, whose date of birth is given as Jan 12, 1962.

The EC officer, who declined to be named, told Malaysiakini that the EC's investigation showed that Norhayati registered as voter using her old IC number, H0509518 in 1991, while Badariah registered as voter in 1998 using her new IC number 610911-12-5540 and old IC number H0509518.

"They have the same old IC number H0509518 and this had caused adjustment, which 'updated' Norhayati's name to Badariah and her 12-digit original IC number to 610911-12-5540 without 'knowing' that the records belong to two different individuals," he said.

The updated record remained in the electoral roll until the third quarter of 2011, when the EC did another adjustment to the 12-digit IC number based on the old IC number, explained the officer.

"In this process, verification with the National Registration Department (NRD) based on the old IC number of H0509518 showed that the corresponding 12-digit IC number is 620112-12-5842 without realising that this 12-digit IC number belongs to Norhayati."

Hence, Badariah's 12-digit number was changed to 620112-12-5842, the officer said.

The EC only realised the mistake, he said, when Norhayati made a complaint in first quarter

of 2012, pointing out that her IC number 620112-12-5842/H0509518 has been registered with the name of Badariah.

"With the complaint and evidence furnished by Norhayati, the EC updated the record and insert her name as the owner of IC number 620112-12-5842/H0509518. This action, at the same time, caused the record of Badariah, who initially registered using 610911-12-5540 and H0509518 to be removed from the electoral roll."

Hence the EC will reinsert Badariah's record (610911-12-5540) in the electoral roll while retaining Norhayati's record (620112-12-5842/H0509518) in the roll according to their records in the NRD database, the officer added.

"The EC has looked into the cases related to same old IC numbers and has taken actions to resolve them in the electoral roll for the second quarter of 2012.

'Shared old IC numbers create confusion'

"The EC always welcomes feedback from the public related to this issue because the problem of shared old IC numbers can create confusion during the adjustment of old IC numbers to the 12-digit new MyKad numbers," the officer elaborated.

On the second case discovered by Ong, where Zainal bin Sila (59051560125447/H0664360) who was registered in Kimanis in the 2008 general election electoral roll, had his new IC number changed to 650422125431 in the third quarter of 2011, and later his name changed to Wasimin bin Mosuling, the officer gave a similar explanation.

He said Wasimin had registered as voter using old IC number H0664360 in 1986, but when the adjustment exercise was done based on this old IC number in 1998, the name had been changed to Zainal, who shares the same old IC number, and Zainal's new IC number 590515-12-5447 was also inserted.

This updated record remained in the electoral roll until another adjustment was done in fourth quarter of 2011.

"In this process, NRD verified that the old IC number H0664360 corresponds with the 12-digit number of 650422-12-5431 and the owner is Wasimin.

"Because the name of Zainal was inserted into the electoral roll in 1998 by mistake, and there has been no record of registration by Zainal detected, the EC reinstated Wasimin's record with the IC number 650422-12-5431/H0664360 in the electoral roll," the officer added.