

Jerantut ballot box 'standoff' ends

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Three and a half days after the polls, the Election Commission (EC) has finally removed ballot boxes kept in Jerantut, Pahang, putting an end to a vigil held by supporters of an Independent to prevent the boxes from being tampered with.

The candidate in question is Koh Boon Heng, who lost the contest for the Damak state seat by 64 votes. He said that EC officers and police personnel removed the ballot boxes at 11am this morning.

"I am a candidate but they did not inform me about this. Our four polling agents in the centre immediately rushed there to check," he said.

Some of his NONEagents discovered that some of the ballot boxes - kept at the Jerantut district council building which served as the vote-tallying centre - had indeed been tampered with and the ballots gone missing (pic right).

"The agents took photographs of the ballot box straight away but they were warned against doing so by the EC officers who threatened to chase them out of the building," he said.

Boon Heng said he would be filing an election petition soon to challenge the election result and seek advise from electoral reforms pressure group Bersih 2.0.

Yesterday, Malaysiakini reported that Boon Heng's agents and supporters had been guarding the boxes since polling day pending the filing of an election petition.

The Damak seat was won by BN's Lau Lee, who polled 7,841 votes. The two other candidates were Mohd Nor Jaafar and PKR candidate Jamaluddin Abd Rahim, who garnered 174 and 2,435 votes respectively. There were 647 spoilt votes.

Boon Heng was a DAP member until he was sacked for contesting as an Independent.

It is understood that he was favoured by Jerantut PAS vote canvassers who in turn formed an informal alliance with him, despite the fact that PKR was represented in Damak.

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