

Report lodged with EC over vote buying in Bayan Baru

MalaysiaKini.com

May 11, 2013

By Susan Loone

Two state PKR leaders have lodged a report at the Election Commission office in Penang over alleged "vote buying", claiming they witnessed such suspicious activities in the Bayan Baru constituency yesterday.

NONEState PKR vice-chairperson Abdul Halim Hussein (right) said he was alerted by reports that a big crowd had gathered at a shop house in Sungai Dua to collect their "lucky draw prizes".

He said between RM120 to RM200 - was handed over to individuals upon their producing their identity cards and lucky draw tickets.

"The amount of money depended on the constituencies, for example, those from Bayan Lepas get only about RM120," he said when met at the EC office at about 4pm. With him was PKR's Bayan Baru MP Sim Tze Tzin (below).

NONEAbdul Halim had earlier lodged a report at the Sungai Nibong police station over the matter at 3pm.

He said he had even spoken to a female Umno branch leader he met when visiting the shop lot who appeared "very excited to collect the RM160".

"We do not want to draw any conclusions but we want the authorities like the police, the EC and later the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to probe the matter and take the appropriate actions," said the former state legislative speaker.

"We will give our full cooperation when these authorities approach us.

"We have lodged reports because we have received complaints about the issue," added the PKR's Teluk Bahang candidate.

Like lining up for banquet

State EC deputy director II Rizal Kamis who received the complaint letter said he would refer the case to his boss before being referred to Kuala Lumpur for further action.

The shop lot in Sungai Dua, where the money is being distributed, did not display

any signs but two manila cards have been put up on the grills of the gates.

On the cards were written the number for the constituencies purportedly won by Umno - N1 (Penaga) , N2 (Bertam) , N3 (Pinang Tunggal), N4 (Permatang Berangan), N5 (Sungai Dua), N6, N21 (Sungai Acheh), N38 (Bayan Lepas), N39 (Pulau Betong) and N40 (Teluk Bahang).

By 11am, around 60-70 people were lining up to get their share of the money, and when their photos were taken by several reporters, screamed "stupid, don't take our photos!".

Reporters on the scene tried but failed to enter the shop lot to speak to the person in-charge as the entrance was too narrow and the crowd too large.

Some justified their lining up to take the cash by saying "because it is the people's money".

When Abdul Halim and Sim arrived at the scene, the duo shook hands with the people, with some of them explaining "this is the rakyat's money, at least it can help us buy vegetables from the market".

Other places enjoying benefit

One of them said he was informed by a friend, and told to bring the lucky draw ticket, and produce his identity card.

According to the PKR leaders, the same activity is being carried out in Paya Terubong and Pulau Betong.

Meanwhile, Sim said if people were handed cash for voting in certain constituencies and their candidates won, it was "a clear sign of vote buying".

He, too, is leaving it to the authorities to probe the cases, expressing sadness, that in the country's democratic process "money politics had played a role to swing marginal seats".

"If this is true, then Abdul Halim is a victim of such vote buying," said the former Pantai Jerejak assemblyperson.

Umno won Teluk Bahang marginally (465 votes) in 2008, but they retook the seat with a higher majority (801) in Sunday's polls.

In the just concluded elections, DAP had won 19 seats, PKR 10 (one extra), PAS one, Umno 10, while Gerakan, MCA and MIC were still out in the cold.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/229830>