

800 voters in Labis given cash to vote for BN, claims DAP

MalaysiaKini.com

May 13, 2013

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Seven police reports have been lodged on canvassing in a voting room of the Labis parliamentary constituency, monetary rewards, blackouts and the wearing of BN T-shirts in the polling centre area.

The most serious offence was the handing out of cash ranging from RM30 to RM50 to about 800 voters in Ladang Gerchang and Ladang Claire when they returned after voting and handed over a slip with the BN logo.

NONEDAP volunteers said they complained on Election Act violations to the Election Commission-appointed Ketua Tempat Mengundi (voting centre head), who is also the local MIC branch chairperson, but he brushed them off.

The cash payments, DAP aspirant candidate S Ramakrishnan (left) said, were made at the BN pondok outside the polling station at Sungei Gerchang Estate. This estate, he said, is owned by members of Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud's family.

Ramakrishnan, who lost narrowly to MCA's Young Professionals Bureau leader Chua Tee Yong, handed over seven copies of police reports to Malaysiakini.

Five of the reports were made at the Chaah police station yesterday. The other two police reports on allegations of RM100,000 offered to buy over DAP campaign workers were made before the general election.

Ramakrishnan said he was shocked when he heard that the constituents were paid in cash immediately after voting.

'Estate staff watched them mark ballot papers'

"They were paid cash when they returned a slip, which they were given before voting, with the assurance of money benefits.

"The slip of paper had the BN logo on it. The voters were monitored by BN officials at the Sungei Gerchang polling station while estate staff stood next to the polling booth to watch them vote for the BN.

"The Sungei Gerchang centre also used pencils for the voting, despite the centre

being issue with ballpoint pens," Ramakrishnan told Malaysiakini soon after returning from Labis yesterday.

He said the Achi Jaya Group of Plantation, which owns the estate in Sungei Gerchang, was owned by relatives of Taib Mahmud and it occupied an area of 30,000 hectares.

The estate staff banned the DAP workers and volunteers from campaigning in Sungei Gerchang or putting up posters there during the campaign period.

"Estate workers were threatened and warned not to support or allow opposition candidates or workers to campaign in the area," said Ramakrishnan, who lost to Chua by 353 votes.

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