

PKR accuses Zahid of buying votes, huge overspending

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PKR has accused Umno's Ahmad Zahid Hamidi of spending more than 10 times the RM200,000 expense limit for his parliamentary seat campaign in the 13th general election, to the tune of over RM2 million.

It has filed two election petitions against Zahid, accusing him of buying votes and overspending in the May 5 general election campaign.

Both petitions refer to videos posted by Zahid himself on his official website, stating that he had recruited 24,000 Bagan Datoh BN supporters, who are also local voters, as campaign workers in his run for the seat.

He also admitted, on video, to giving them RM100 and 5kg of rice each.

NONE" He thinks he is smart in recruiting them as campaign workers and paying them, but on both counts he kanto (is busted)," PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli (right) told a press conference in Petaling Jaya today.

In the first petition, PKR has claimed that what Zahid did, despite the payments to voters being camouflaged as benefits to campaign workers, was outright vote buying and therefore an offence under the Election Offences Act.

The second petition accused Zahid of illegally recruiting too many workers and using more money than he is allowed to spend under election regulations.

PKR argued that the amount needed to pay 24,000 'campaign workers' RM100 and 5kg of rice each, worked out to more than RM2 million, which is over 10 times the RM200,000 limit imposed for a parliamentary seat campaign.

It argued that no single candidate ever had that many volunteers directly under him or her, and that electoral regulations limit the number of workers based on the size of the constituency.

Zahid 'defends' his actions

The petitions were filed today by PKR candidate for Bagan Datoh Madhi Hassan and local voter Azmi Sulaiman respectively at the Ipoh High Court in Perak.

Lawyers Edmund Bon and Chong Kok Yew acted for the two petitioners.

NONE Ironically, in the same video used as evidence by PKR, Zahid (left) is shown defending his actions.

He was adamant that he had not violated any laws because the payments were made to 'campaign workers', and as such did not constitute a bribe.

He also argued that he was not buying votes because the campaign workers were BN supporters who would vote for the coalition's candidate.

Malaysiakini had previously tried to obtain Zahid's comments, but to no avail.

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