

'Politicians offered journalists cash during GE13'

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By Aidila Razak

Some journalists covering the 13th general election faced ethical challenges, having been offered cash and other benefits by election candidates and their parties.

klcc book reading 270113 masjalizah hamzahCentre for Independent Journalism executive director Masjaliza Hamzah (right) said more than half of the journalists said so, when interviewed for the NGO's qualitative research on media experience during the polls.

"It (incidents of politicians offering journalists cash) is like cancer. You either have it or you know someone who does. It took a toll on some of them. Some break down when it happens to them," she said.

She was referring to a journalist who broke into tears after being forced to confront the situation many times.

Presenting her preliminary findings based on extended interviews with 15 editors and reporters, she said the handouts were at times forced into the journalists' pockets or sent to their homes.

"If the journalist's family doesn't know his or her position on it, they would then receive the money," she said.

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