

PAS Youth nabs suspected 'phantom voter'

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P KUBOR PAS Youth claims to have nabbed a suspected "phantom voter" at the Pengkalan Kubor by-election.

In a statement today, its legal and human rights bureau (Juham) director Noorazmir Zakaria said the voter possessed a Malaysian identity card and passport, but it is suspected that he is not a Malaysian citizen.

"Suspicions were raised when he was questioned by Juham lawyers. The voter does not know his own IC number, his age, or his address in Pengkalan Kubor.

"Stranger still, he does not even know the state constituency that he is voting in or the name of the polling centre he was voting in, although he admitted to voting for the BN candidate," he said.

The allegedly dubious voter was caught at the Bendang Pa'yong polling centre by PAS election workers, he said, before the Juham lawyers inspected his IC and questioned him.

Earlier, he was supposedly seen to have been accompanied by a village chief, but he allegedly fled when he realised that Juham's lawyers were present.

The Pengkalan Kubor constituents go to the polls today.

"Juham urges all election workers to be more vigilant and concerned about suspicious individuals," said Noorazmir, who urged them to report such persons to the bureau's lawyers.

He added that based on the voter's passport, the voter travels frequently between Thailand and Malaysia, and admitted that his family is residing in Thailand.

The voter also supposedly said that the first time he voted was during the 13th general election last year.

Citizen's arrest

When contacted later, Noorazmir said he and Juham's lawyers are en route to Tumpat to lodge a police report on the matter.

He said this is the first time Juham had dealt with dubious voters directly, whereas previous instances had been hearsay or without any concrete evidence.

The voter's documents matched those in the electoral roll, he said, so the voter is still eligible to vote.

"It is just that Juham is questioning the authenticity of the identity card and whether he is actually a Malaysian citizen.

"This is a dangerous issue because it involves national security.

"Moreover, the voter himself admits that he has never stayed in Pengkalan Kubor although it (his identity card) has a Pengkalan Kubor address. He even confirms that his family and his children stay in Thailand.

"Therefore, we hope the police will investigate this because we fear that more in Malaysia face the same case," he told Malaysiakini.

When asked about the circumstances under which PAS held the voter, Noorazmir said it was a citizen's arrest made under Section 27 of the Criminal Procedure Code, together with provisions under the Election Offences Act against impersonation, treating, undue influence, and bribery.

He said the law allows the arrest under certain conditions, including that the detainee should be turned over to the nearest police officer or police station.

"In this case, we handed the suspect immediately to the police on duty there and the police then questioned the suspect," he said.

Police: He is Malaysian

Meanwhile, Kelatan police chief Mazlan Lazim denied that the man was a phantom voter.

"The alleged phantom voter is a Malaysian citizen who had carried out his responsibility by casting his vote in SK Bendang Pak Yong.

"There is no issue of phantom voter as claimed by Juham (PAS' legal and human rights bureau).

"Investigations on the individual did not show he was a Thai national. The issue of phantom voters did not arise," Mazlan is reported by The Star as saying.

