

MCA denies vote-buying as 300 brave heat for RM100
Malaysiakini.com
November 03, 2010

MCA Sabah chief Edward Khoo today denied allegations that they were handing out RM100 cash to Batu Sapi voters after 300 people were found loitering outside the party office in the hope of getting a payout.

In an emergency press conference held at a coffeeshop near their office in Grandview, a suburb on the outskirts of Sandakan town, Khoo dismissed the claim as a "dirty trick" used by the opposition to scuttle MCA's campaign machinery.

"Today we were supposed to have our briefing and distribute allowances to party workers. We did not expect the opposition to use such a dirty tactic of asking people to come to our office to collect a payout," he said.

NONE"Because of this dirty tactic, they jammed up our operations this morning and in the first half of this afternoon. We are very angry about this - giving out money is not a tradition of the MCA."

Khoo (centre in photo) accused the opposition of going around Chinese areas early this morning and telling people to go and collect RM100 in cash payout at the MCA's office.

"We are utterly disgusted by such tactics. We are not so stupid that we would do things that go against the election rules. People with a bit of sense would not do such things.

"Now the rakyat know the true colours of the opposition... they are doing this because they feel they are losing," he said.

MCA claimed that the opposition is trying to get the voters frustrated in not getting paid so that they would vote against BN in tomorrow's Batu Sapi by-election.

Waited in vain

Earlier in the day, a 300-strong crowd thronged an MCA office in Sandakan after word spread of RM100 cash allegedly being handed out to voters in Batu Sapi.

NONEThe exclusively Chinese crowd, many of whom were elderly men and women, stood for hours under the blistering sun as they waited their turn up the stairwell leading to MCA's fourth floor office.

The crowd however dispersed at around 2.45pm after DAP's Sri Tanjung assemblyperson Jimmy Wong went up to his rival party's office to check on the rumours.

He came down a few minutes later, telling the crowd in Hakka and Cantonese that there was no money given out and asked everyone to go home.

Following Wong's visit, a few MCA party workers were seen coming down to the ground floor to tell the people waiting outside that no payments were being made.

Attempts to get into the MCA office were in vain as they did not allow anyone in.

Many were left frustrated after their long and fruitless wait.

"They should have just sent down a representative to tell us whether or not they are giving money instead of making us wait so long with no idea what's happening," decried a butcher.

The stocky man was clearly annoyed by the situation, but he stressed that it was not because he did not get any money but because of the lack of information given to the waiting crowd.

"I came because my friends at the market told me there was money being given out. If they are not giving, they should just tell us because a lot of the people here are old and the heat is bad for them," he said.

The power of suggestion

Earlier, those who were waiting to go up the stairwell said they were told some people were given RM100 this morning, provided they showed their IC and voting slip to confirm they are indeed Batu Sapi voters.

"I came early this morning but I didn't bring my slip, so I didn't get any money. I went home to get my slip and came back at around 1pm and suddenly there are so many people," lamented a trader.

There were also at least several cases of elderly women fainting from the scorching heat, with one of them falling off her chair and knocking the back of her head on the pavement, causing a commotion.

The elderly lady however appeared unhurt and after recovering from the fall, was ushered into a waiting car to be sent home.

One of the people who helped the lady said the crowd should have been managed much better, instead of leaving them waiting for long periods outside the building and on the stairwell as the queue moved at a snail's pace.

"If they want to give out money, they should organise it properly. How can they expect old people to stand for long hours?" she said.