

"One bed, two constituencies" because Election Commission "separated" husband and wife, Tribunal told

Malaysian Insider

Sept 21 , 2013

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A couple that lives in the same house in Johor has been "separated" by the Election Commission and told to vote in different constituencies, the Bersih People's Tribunal was told today.

The couple, identified as Mr and Mrs Ong, was represented by a family member, G.S. Ong. He said that before the delineation exercise in 2003, they had lived in Kg Abdullah, Segamat, for over 40 years and came under the parliamentary constituency of Segamat (P125).

After 2003, however, Mr Ong was asked to vote in Segamat, which was reorganised to become P140, while Mrs Ong was designated to vote in a newly-created constituency named Sekijang (P141).

G.S.Ong said he felt sorry for the couple who could not vote together.

"What this shows is that the Election Commission is so powerful it can 'divorce couples' and this has happened to many couples and families in Kampung Abdullah," G.S. Ong said.

To prove his point, he produced a map which showed neighbouring homes dotted blue and red intermittently, showing voters in the constituencies of Segamat in red and Sekijang in blue. They live in the same neighbourhood but had to vote in different constituencies.

In GE13, Health Minister Datuk Seri S.Subramaniam retained his Segamat seat beating PKR's Datuk Chua Jui Meng by a 1,217-vote majority.

This is because the EC had moved pro-opposition supporters to Sekijang in the electoral roll, said G.S Ong.

He added that the aim was to dilute the opposition support in Segamat to ensure a Barisan Nasional win.

Chua subsequently lost an election petition he filed in court to challenge the result.

Panel chairman Professor Yash Pal Ghai asked conducting officer Professor Gurdial Singh if he had brought up this matter to the EC, to which Gurdial said, "This is why we asked EC to come here."

Political analyst Dr Wong Chin Huat (pic), who first revealed the Ong poser at the tribunal today in a slide titled "One bed, two constituencies", said he noted it was impossible that the Ong home stood directly in the middle of P140 and P141.

"And you find these cases, where people from the same house are given different constituencies to vote in.

"This destroys the identity and unity of a community," Wong added after he presented his

views on electoral reform. - September 21, 2013.

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