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Alien syndicates using loans as bait to cheat our businessmen

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THE Dewan Rakyat has been informed that there were foreign syndicates taking advantage of the country's present economic and currency problems by offering huge financial loans to unsuspecting local businessmen.

Wan Hanafiah Wan Mat Saman (BN-Pokok Sena) urged the Finance Ministry to investigate the matter before businessmen and corporate leaders fell victim to these syndicates.

Disclosing the modus operandi of these tricksters, he said, they would approach businessmen by offering massive financial loans.

"Having signed all the relevant papers as required by the lending companies, the broker will then ask for the so-called "lobby money" from the businessman, which could run into millions of ringgit," he said.

Debating on the motion of thanks on the Royal Address, Wan Hanafiah said an enquiry by the authorities in the respective countries revealed that there were no such business establishments.

When approached later at the lobby, he said these syndicates originated from Australia and South Africa.

"I want to warn local businessmen and corporate leaders not to fall victim to these syndicates as they might find themselves in serious financial problems," he said, adding that he had authoritative letters to prove his claim.

Wan Hanafiah also called on the Home Ministry to ban a book entitled Sunnah Nabi Muhammad Lawan Mahathir Mohamad written by S.H. Alattas.

He called on the authorities to take stern action against the author as he had misused the sacred word "Sunnah" for the book.

"I would like to propose that the authorities detain the author under the Internal Security Act," he said, adding that the authorities should also investigate whether there were any politicians sponsoring the author to write the book.

On the present water crisis, Wan Hanafiah suggested that water treatment plants be built near Lake Chini in Pahang and Lake Chenderoh in Perak.

"These lakes are water-rich and could help alleviate the water-crisis faced by the people," he said, adding that pipe-lines linking these treatment plants to States in dire need of water could be constructed.

Dr Tan Yee Kew (BN-Klang) questioned the cost-effectiveness in the privatisation of the maintenance of Government vehicles undertaken by Spanco.

"I am told that it costs the Government RM10,000 monthly to maintain a Minister's car. Many will find it hard to justify such an exorbitant maintenance fee," she said.

She said that such weaknesses needed to be addressed, adding that failure to do so would inevitably hamper the privatisation process.

"What I have said is not intended to discredit the Economic Planning Unit ... I would like to suggest that the EPU confines its role to the economic planning of the nation, makes recommendation for privatisation project only on broad principles, and acts as a co-ordinating body when necessary," said Tan.

She proposed that actual initiation of a privatisation project, the scrutiny of the proposed project and participating companies should be the responsibilities of the ministry concerned.

Dr G. Leelavathi (BN-Kapar) thanked Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon for resolving

the Kampung Rawa episode in an amicable manner and acceptable to the two parties concerned.

"Malaysia being a multi-racial and multi-religious society has earned global respect and such an episode should not have happened as it would tarnish our image," she added.

Dr Leelavathi proposed that the Federal and State Governments as well as religious leaders meet and discuss ways to avoid such an episode from recurring.

On education reformation being undertaken to make the country a centre of educational excellence, she hoped that certain Tamil schools would be upgraded to participate in the Smart School project.

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