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Irked by Keadilan members' benefits

MANY Parti Keadilan Nasional members are beneficiaries of projects introduced by the Government under its privatisation programme and this has irked Pas, its ally.

A Perak delegate, Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin, said a Pas member had told him he was dissatisfied about this and would use it to fight Keadilan.

"The Pas member and many others had scrutinised the list of share recipients displayed outside Merdeka Hall yesterday.

"Although a few Pas members are on the list, he is very upset that Keadilan members have benefited a lot more from the Government's National Economic Policy ... and that is only the share allocations," he said.

He said unlike Umno, Pas is devoid of leaders with experience and knowledge to manage the nation's economy.

Describing, Dr Mahathir as a "commander", he said Umno members are willing to "fight any battle under" his leadership.

Hamzah said the people, including members of the Opposition, should be thankful to Dr Mahathir for putting the economy back on track.

"It is unfair that our party president was singled out as the main cause of the economic downturn in 1997, when his former deputy, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, was never held responsible.

"He (Anwar) was also the Finance Minister then. Why was he also not blamed?"

Also, to the delight of the delegates, Hamzah said a makcik he met yesterday outside the Putra World Trade Centre had wanted to personally thank Dr Mahathir for reviving the economy.

Relating her experience, he said she was forced to use up her savings, meant for her Haj, when her children failed to sent monthly contributions due to the economic downturn.

"However, her children have started sending her the allowance since last month and she attributed it to the Government's efforts to spur the economy.

"Don't we just wonder how an old lady can be so appreciative of the Government, but Pas members refuse to acknowledge the efforts of our leaders to revive the economy?"

Before ending his speech, Hamzah said he wanted to share with the delegates the outcome of a meeting he had with Dr Mahathir yesterday.

Just then, the chair reminded him that time was up and he should postpone it and he obliged.

Negri Sembilan delegate, Zainuddin Ismail, said although Pas had always emphasised "halal" and "haram", the Kelantan Government did not question the origins of a RM600 million Federal allocation it received recently.

"As it benefited them, Pas members and leaders accepted the funds and did not question the origins.

"Pas also had failed to raise a Malay agenda in its economic programme, resulting in a 19 per cent poverty rate in Kelantan, compared with only about four per cent in Negri Sembilan."

He said Umno's political struggles had assured socio-economic progress for the Malays and other races.

Pahang delegate, Datuk Zainal Hassan, urged the managers of Government agencies such as Syarikat Telekom Malaysia, Petronas, Perbadanan Nasional Bhd, Tenaga Nasional Bhd and Pos Malaysia to check the involvement of their employees with Opposition parties.

He said the managers of Telekom and Tenaga Nasional should check why flags of a certain Opposition party was allowed to be hoisted on telephone and lamp posts.

"The relevant authorities should check attempts by the Opposition to infiltrate Felda land schemes and spread lies and hatred against the Government.

"I am also concerned that Petronas workers in Terengganu could fall into the Opposition's trap if we do not check the matter," he said.

Also, the rural folks are very happy with the Government and that is why there is no chaos or any "reformasi" effort in the villages.

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