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Tit-for-tat move against RM10 deduction ploy

BARISAN Nasional Shah Alam MP Datuk Mohd Zin Mohamed and Parliamentary Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Noh Omar teamed up to floor Datuk Hassan Ali (Pas-Parit Buntar) who tabled a motion to deduct RM10 from the Finance Minister's salary.

After the Pas vice-president finished justifying why the House should deduct RM10 from the salary of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who also holds the Finance Ministry portfolio, Mohd Zin immediately launched a counter attack.

He charged the Parit Buntar MP had ulterior motives in tabling the motion, and to show that Hassan was also not beyond reproach, referred to Sabaha Management Sdn Bhd owned by Hassan which was taken to court by the authorities for violating the Forestry Act.

A clash erupted with Hassan furiously complaining to Speaker Tun Mohamed Zahir Ismail that the matter raised by Mohd Zin was personal and was before the court, hence it was sub judice.

Zahir concurred and to cool things down asked Mohd Zin to change the topic.

At this point, Noh stood up and attempting to keep the issue alive, posed a question to Mohd Zin on Sabaha.

"I have been told that Parit Buntar (Hassan Ali) has paid RM3,000 in fines. He has settled the compound, so how come it is still sub judice?"

Again Hassan protested, this time supported by Dr Syed Azman Syed Ahmad Nawwi (Pas-Kuala Terengganu) but Mohd Zin gleefully replied that such a payment had been made.

"The accounts show there has been a payment for RM3,000 from Sabaha."

When everyone thought the matter had come to an end, Noh stood up again.

"I want to ask YB (Mohd Zin). Is it true that Sabaha with an office in Bangsar has not paid the assessment payments? ...I got a fax on this."

This upset Hassan further but his protest was drowned by jeers from backbenchers, with remarks like "duduklah, hutang tak bayar" coming from the floor.

The motion was later defeated.

Earlier, in opposing the motion, Datuk Ruhanie Ahmad (BN-Parit Sulong) chided Hassan and Pas for trying to tarnish the good name of the Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

He said it was sad that Pas marked the beginning of the fasting month with such a move.

Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar (BN-Batang Lupar) said Hassan's motion was political and had nothing to do with financial matters.

He said the Opposition was wasting precious hours by moving the motion, hence they should be penalised if their motions were defeated.

"Look at the court system. One is free to file a suit but he has to pay costs if he fails. So the same treatment should be used in Parliament."