

26/05/2003

Barisan reps support move to punish those who fail in their

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Barisan Nasional elected representatives today supported any decision to punish wakil rakyat who played truant from the Dewan Rakyat and abdicate their service to the people.

Bentong Member of Parliament Liow Tiong Lai said the BN should take action against such errant and ineffective wakil rakyat.

"We have been given the chance in the previous general election to serve the people and the party. If wakil rakyat neglect their duties, the BN must punish them, and these representatives have to face the consequences," he said when asked to comment on a statement yesterday by BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamad Rahmat that action would be taken against wakil rakyat who played truant and neglected their constituents.

Mohamad was commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's warning on Friday that MPs who did not fulfil their responsibilities would be dropped from the next general election.

Mohamad also said that some representatives failed to submit their monthly reports.

Liow said the issue of poor attendance of wakil rakyat in the Dewan Rakyat had been discussed by the Backbenchers Club (BBC).

Kota Raja state assemblywoman Kamala Ganapathy said it was incumbent upon wakil rakyat to serve the people because they were elected by them.

"The meaning of wakil rakyat is 'mewakili rakyat' or representing the people. We are not merely people with the title 'Yang Berhormat' but we must be 'Yang Berkhidmat' or the one who serves".

Kamala who is also Wanita MIC Deputy chief agreed with the decision to drop errant representatives in the general election. "When elected representatives do not attend Dewan Rakyat, they are not fulfilling their duty. It is a must for them to be there. If they are not there, who is going to bring forward the problems of the people?"

Arau MP Datuk Mastika Junaidah Hussein said she knew of representatives who were not serious about their responsibilities.

However, she said the low attendance could be because some wakil rakyat were not present throughout a single session.

"Sometimes the representatives might not be inside the house during certain times of Dewan Rakyat session, but they were still there".

However, she said their attendance was important to correct the misrepresentation by the Opposition.