

**No civil staff lay-offs, assures Pakatan
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by S Pathmawathy**

The opposition coalition clarified that no government employee would be laid-off if Pakatan Rakyat comes to power, but instead it will focus on improving the efficiency of the civil service.

In a joint press conference in Parliament today, they attempted to salve fears that the 1.2 million-strong civil service will be streamlined.

PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub (left) stressed that Pakatan in its alternative budget proposal had only mooted an outline to make the service more efficient and not trim its numbers.

“Pakatan understands that political interference is a factor why the stature of the civil service has eroded,” he said.

“However, Pakatan would like to explain that the status of 1.2 million civil servants are guaranteed as enshrined under the Article 132 of the constitution,” said the Kubang Kerian MP.

The coalition was trying to soothe anxiety caused by DAP national publicity chief Tony Pua’s recent comments to reduce number and to lop off unproductive branches of the service.

The Malaysian civil service has long been criticised as being way too bloated and inefficient, but despite Pua’s comment the opposition pledged to retain existing staff.

Salahuddiin was joined by PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar and PAS central committee member Dzulkefly Ahmad.

The stand was also endorsed by PKR vice-president Tian Chua and DAP’s Liew Chin Tong.

Salahuddin blasted critics who had called Pua racist for the comment, which they claimed had disparaged the Malay-majority service, and claiming that Pakatan too had vowed to do so in its budget.

He insisted that any attempt to suggest otherwise was slanderous of Pakatan’s budget manifesto.

“However, Pakatan would to like remind the civil service that they must fulfil their responsibilities according to standards in accordance with the rakyat’s aspiration,” he added.

Wanting to make extra-extra-large (XXL)

Nurul Izzah took a swipe at the BN government for allocating billions to hire more people to boost the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu).

She said that if Pakatan administered the government, they would aim to slash Putrajaya’s operating expenditure, which she claimed is largely dedicated to employ consultants.

“Instead of making do with what you have, under the recent Budget they want to make extra-extra-large (XXL),” said the Lembah Pantai MP.

Dzulkefly, on the other hand, pointed out that under the Government Transformation Programme (GTP), it was Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak who wanted make the government smaller.

He also urged Najib to explain what smaller meant before pointing fingers to criticise Pakatan leaders for their comments.

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