

**Time for 'tokenism' long over, says Nor Mohamed**  
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**by Hazlan Zakaria**

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of the Economic Planning Unit Nor Mohamed Yakcop today hit out at private firms who only recruit token bumiputera to fill the bumi quota and do not allow for true participation of the bumiputera in "significant positions" in their firms.

"The time for tokenism is long over. It is time for the private sector to not only provide token positions to the bumiputera but to allow them to fill significant positions.

"The argument that they cannot find suitable candidates from among the bumiputera is no longer true. It may have been so in the 70s, but not now," the minister told the House today in answer to an oral question from Ibrahim Ali (Independent-Pasir Mas) during Question Time.

The reverse, said Nor Mohamed (right), was also true for the GLCs, in that they should not recruit the non-bumiputera just for the sake of fulfilling quotas but to hire viable candidates.

He said it was time the private sector adopted the standard practice of national petroleum company Petronas' in employing bumiputera in professional and management positions.

As an example, he said, Petronas alone employed more than 5,000 bumiputera professionals in its world class global operations, something that should prove the capability of bumiputeras.

Nor Mohamed was responding to Ibrahim's question about complaints from within Petronas that certain "strategic positions" were filled by individuals put in place just to fill quotas and were actually failures in their previous jobs, with no real credentials.

Ibrahim, who is Malay rights NGO Perkasa chief, asked the government to intervene and ensure that public-listed companies and large firms awarded government contracts, such as construction giant YTL Corp and communications heavyweight Maxis, have more openings for bumiputera leadership.

"Out of 630 public-listed firms, only 120 have Malay CEOs, and out of the 96 top companies in Malaysia, only seven have Malay CEOs," lamented Ibrahim, pushing for more bumiputera to be given the lead in the corporate sector.

Having succeeded in pushing the government to form Teraju, a body formed to ensure the bumiputera agenda in the nation's development, Perkasa is pressuring the government not to forget the Malays and bumiputera in the rush to implement an all-inclusive 1Malaysia.

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