

Focus on unemployment and inflation
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As the Umno annual general meeting entered its second day, the focus in the afternoon session was on the economy, especially on resolving the problems of unemployment and inflation.

Besides this, the focus was also on the need to continue assistance to the Malays, a topic that has been raised time and time again.

There is a need for affirmative action on the issue of unemployment, Umno Youth delegate from Sabah, Jamawi Jaafar, said.

"It is not only the graduates but also graduate teachers from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris and graduates of Universiti Tun Abdul Razak who are affected.

"Similarly, nurses also failed to gain employment. Imagine that they are the hopes of their families, but they are in despair as a result of not getting jobs," Jamawi said.

To make matters worse, he said, these people also have to repay their PTPTN loans.

Jamawi also raised the issue of inflation and he compared the prices of flour in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah.

"Although the price is fixed in the peninsula, it is not like that in Sabah. Transported to the rural outskirts, it is more expensive," he said.

Earlier, another delegate, Idris Hashim, proposed that government-linked companies (GLCs) give some senior posts to Umno members as they would be assisting the Malays and the party.

Rosni Zahari from the Maran division, Mohd Hasnol Ayub of Penampang and Budiman Mohd Zuhdi, who hails from Sungai Besar, also reiterated Idris' call on the GLCs to help the Malays.

Budiman further proposed that the government abolishes toll collection at Batu Tiga in Selangor and that it also makes a one-off payment to help university students.

NEP results not felt

Puteri delegate Jamilah Hanim Othman said the New Economic Policy has not seen the desired results.

Jamilah said only about 4.3 per cent of the companies listed on the stock exchange were owned by the bumiputera.

"This certainly needs to be improved further.

"Similarly, for those who have Amanah Saham Bumiputera, the dividend is less than 10 per cent annually," she said.

Jamilah also asked who the Malays could blame if they still could not achieve the desired results.

She went on to propose that a Special Committee on Bumiputera Economy be formed to raise Malay standing in the economy.

The repeats in calls seeking assistance, and of the government not offering solutions, are in contrast to Umno president and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's calls for party members to transform themselves.

Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin had in his policy speech called for a new movement that is solution-driven to resolve the problems of the people.

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