

PKR: Najib must explain RM2.2bil highway award

MalaysiaKini.com

February 21, 2012

PKR wants Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to explain the basis and criteria on which the government picked a company owned by the Umno legal adviser and the wife of a former chief justice to award the RM2.2 billion Kinrara-Damansara highway (Kidex) project.

Its party vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar (right), said Umno legal adviser Mohd Hafarizam Harun and former Chief Justice Zaki Azmi, have been thrust into the spotlight, following Hafarizam's admission that his company had been awarded the project.

Both individuals, she noted, must be open to public scrutiny considering the nature of the high-profile takeover of Perak by BN, and being awarded the Kidex concession.

"The Perak constitutional crisis is fresh in the minds of many Malaysians, specifically the allegation the judiciary expedited BN's Zambry Abdul Kadir's application while denying Mohd Nizar Jamaluddin's application," she said.

"Hafarizam (left) is a director in both Emrail Sdn Bhd and Zabima Engineering Sdn Bhd, while Zaki's wife is a director in Emrail," Nurul Izzah noted.

Following this, she said, the government and the prime minister must come clean on the administrations's policy in considering concession awards, and granting contract packages, especially with respect to the New Economic Model and the Strategic Reform Initiatives.

"What are the complete terms of concessions, toll rates and future profit-sharing arrangements (following the award)?" she asked.

Nurul Izzah also wants to know Najib's stand on Section 9 of the Judges Code of Ethics 2009, where "a judge shall, on his appointment or at any time thereafter as may be required by the Chief Justice of the Federal Court, declare in writing all his assets to the Chief Justice of the Federal Court".

From the above, she said "it is incumbent on the current Chief Justice Arifin Zakaria to order Zaki (right) to declare, in writing, his and his family's assets, following this allegation.

Hafarizam confirmed today that the two companies had been awarded the project, but denied that it was a reward following the takeover of Perak by the BN.

Is cronyism still alive?

Nurul Izzah said the fact remained, given that blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin's allegations were true, that another small group of cronies would benefit while a vast number of Malaysians would become victims of the project.

"The terms of the agreement between the government and the chosen entities must be disclosed to ensure it does not end up as yet another concession that will continue to burden Malaysians.

"Malaysians are also expecting more from second or third generation concessions, considering a slew of new standards that the government has been promising. Lest we forget, the BN government has a poor track record with respect to concessions," she said.

Nurul Izzah said frank answers from Najib were needed and would go a long way in reassuring the people that they would not be burdened with further bailouts and re-privatisations.

The Government Transformation Programme, she said, promises to reduce leakages and minimise wastage of funds allocated for national development and operational expenditure by ensuring transparency in the awarding of contracts.

“Clearly, the government must prove that this discreet awarding of yet another highway project is above board, and is in the rakyat’s interest.

“Or the people will have no choice but to disbelieve the BN’s pledge of transforming the economy; and punish it accordingly.”

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