

**PKR: Aid cut makes rubbish of Najib's reforms**

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PKR today slammed the directive to withhold aid to a disabled opposition supporter in Sarawak as not only undemocratic, but contradicts the prime minister's promise of reforms.

Party vice-president N Surendran (left) was responding to reports that Sarawak agriculture assistant minister Mong Dagang had directed the withdrawal of subsidies to Frusis Lebi, a disabled person deemed as "pro-opposition".

"What the BN has done in Frusis Lebi's case goes against the very basis of our democratic system of government.

"It also makes nonsense of Prime Minister Najib's promises of reform and a fairer administration.

"This disgraceful act is also consistent with Barisan Nasional's long history of misusing government powers to bribe, threaten, terrorise and illegally pressure citizens into supporting the BN," he said.

Surendran said punishing Lebi for supporting the opposition was not only "intolerant and shameful" but unlawful, as it breached a citizen's right to freedom of association under Article 10 of the federal constitution.

It was reported on Sunday that a letter bearing Dagang's (right) signature titled, 'Cease all government assistance - Mr Frusis Lebi from Entualang Entawa, Sri Aman', had been posted on Facebook.

When contacted at the time, the assistant minister and Bukit Begunan state assemblyperson had refused to comment, but has admitted today admitted to the fact, saying, ""We cannot continue to give welfare assistance and subsidies because he is a strong opposition supporter."

BN's 'poor track record'

Surendran meanwhile also ticked the BN off for its "long track record of complete insensitivity to the needs of the disabled".

Frusis Lebi makes police report against mong dagang letterHe pointed out the neglect in areas of education, access to public facilities and employment for the disabled.

"Indeed, the BN government acts as if the disabled do not exist. Disabled advocacy groups have pointed this out time and again to no avail," said the prominent human rights lawyer.

Meanwhile Lebi said he first had his disability aid suspended last October, six months after the state election, and then recently, had his farming subsidies cut.

The 51-year-old farmer with a hand disability lodged a police report on the matter last Friday.

Surendran that the government must to apologise to Lebi and to immediately restore both his farm and welfare aid.

He also called for a "full and transparent inquiry" on the matter and for action to be taken on the offenders.