

Khairy: Oil royalty panel is no election candy
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The federal government's decision to set up a special committee on the paying of oil royalty to the east coast states has nothing to do with the coming general election, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin has said.

It is a sincere move by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to assist states with less economic development and to improve the payment mechanism for the people's benefit, Berita Harian today quotes Khairy as saying.

"Actually there is no need (to set up the committee) because the oil is not produced in the waters of Kelantan, but it is due to the prime minister's concern to ensure east coast states receive cash payment for the benefit of the people," he says.

This cash aid was not something new as the government had been giving it since 2009, through state development departments, the Rembau MP said.

Last Saturday, Najib announced that the special committee would be chaired by former chief justice Abdul Hamid Mohamad, and it members comprising legal experts from within and outside the country, as well as representatives from the Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu state governments.

Perkasa: Form a bipartisan body

"The special committee will carry out a comprehensive study within six months from the date of its establishment, taking into account all aspects of the claims, and will make appropriate recommendations to the federal government," Najib said in a statement.

In another related development, Malay rights group Perkasa suggested a bi-partisan body named Kelantan Oil Royalty Board be formed to ensure transparent distribution of the oil royalty to the Kelantanese.

Utusan Malaysia today quotes Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali as saying the board should be jointly headed by Umno veteran and Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, and Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat.

"The post of chief executive officer can be mandated to the state secretary, together with the director of Kelantan Federal Development Department (JPPK)," Ibrahim is quoted as saying.