

Why men and women of the force fear BN

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The traditional support the 100,000-strong police force gives the BN during elections is due to the fear among the officers that they will be seen as derhaka (traitors) and ungrateful if they vote for the opposition.

This, said retired Bukit Aman Criminal Investigations Department (CID) director Fauzi Shaari, who joined PAS three months ago, arises because the men and women of the force feel bound and indebted to the government.

"Many (police personnel) think of their salaries and allowances paid by the government. Going by such thinking, the government cannot be other than BN, which has been in power all this while," Fauzi said.

"Due to this, those who don't vote for BN ...would be considered as 'derhaka' or ungrateful to the government."

The government and the political party in power, he stressed, should be kept separate. The police can indeed freely exercise their right to vote for the party of their choice.

"The government is just a mandate holder. It must exercise its responsibilities - it must feed us and the people. The people should understand, it is not compulsory for us to always vote or support the same party.

"We can choose any (party). It will be much better if the party leaders are good, honest, trustworthy and not corrupt.

"So do not be afraid that we (in the police force) will be labelled as traitors if we want to support another party."

Duty is to serve the rakyat

Asked whether police personnel have been pressured by the government into voting for BN, Fauzi said it did not happen while he was in office, as the government did not need to do so.

So long as the police, or other public servants for that matter, work for the government, he said, they have to obey the regulations, operational guidelines or instructions that have been set.

If the police officers declare their political support for a certain party, they would be deemed to have broken the regulations, Fauzi said.

"You are bound by the government, you have to obey and serve. The issue of taking sides should not happen during your service. Our duty is to serve the rakyat.

"As a police officer, your duties include issuing summonses and making arrests. Carry out your job according to the laws.

"We have to be fair. Do not single out a specific person. Then your salary will be halal (legal). The government gives it to you. You will also receive rewards from Allah because you are honest."

Officers fail to understand right to choose

Fauzi also said that some police personnel might not understand that they are free to support any political party.

Democracy would be meaningless if members of the police force are ordered to choose only the BN as the government, he noted.

"What is democracy? You (are supposed to) enhance democracy, which means that you should support what is correct and change what is wrong," he said.

During his 32 years in the police force, Fauzi had held various senior posts, including that of Sarawak chief police officer (2001-03) and Selangor chief police officer (2004-2005).

He went on to head the CID at Bukit Aman in 2005 and retired the following year.

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