Rafizi: New NGO will even investigate Pakatan
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By Hazlan Zakaria

Despite its PKR-links, the new transparency and anti-corruption watchdog National Oversight and Whistleblowers Centre (NOW) has vowed to investigate all claims of corruption including those involving Pakatan Rakyat.

"We are in this for the long haul, we are serious in this business. We will be as vicious to Pakatan as we will be to anyone else.

"But they (complainants) must have proof. I will not entertain allegations without documents; I don't have the time," NOW chief Rafizi Ramli said.

Rafizi, who is also PKR's director of strategy, said this while launching the NGO in Sungai Besi this morning.

The launch comes in the wake of Rafizi's court action for his role as a whistleblower that left the government red-faced in the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC) scandal, where a RM250 million soft loan for beef production was allegedly used to purchase land and condominiums.

He related that the NGO was conceived in twenty-minutes while he was browsing in a major bookstore in KL.

Rafizi added that he envisioned the NGO as a support system for whistleblowers based on his own "accidental" involvement in the NFC saga.

He said that while he was lucky to have had the support of friends, colleagues and family, other would be whistleblowers may not have the same and that is the role that he hopes NOW will play.

He said that they are looking to start a fund to help protect whistleblowers by providing legal help and a modicum of financial assistance.

Rafizi appealed for the public to donate to this, adding that they can donate money at the group's website.

Aside cash, NOW is also looking for interns, researchers and volunteers to help then sift through tip-offs of alleged corruption for them to highlight.

Monitoring parliament

Other then providing a conducive environment for whistleblowers, Rafizi said that NOW is also looking at the oversight role in monitoring parliament to ensure accountability as well as fighting for legal protection of whistleblowers.

NOW's stance of promoting transparency and accountability is shared by the Malaysian Bar.

Its treasurer Steven Thiru , who was also present at the launch, expressed the Bar's support for the NGO as he said transparency and accountability are also principles that his organisation has stood for since its inception.

He called for the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 to be overhauled and strengthened to provide true human rights protection to whistleblowers instead of the lip-service and half-shod measures the Act currently comprises.

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