

PKR: EDL takeover proves Buku Jingga is right
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PKR has lauded the federal government's move to take over the Eastern Dispersal Link (EDL) highway in Johor Baru following public complaints on its high toll rates as a vindication of Pakatan Rakyat's Buku Jingga.

"Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's move has validated the economic management principles advocated in Buku Jingga," PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli said in a statement.

The takeover, Rafizi said, was in line with the measures Pakatan in its Orange Book proposes to take with regard to concessionaires in country if it comes into power. These include:

Using a pragmatic approach to the financing model in determining the government's financial commitment, possible compensation and profit margins of project concessionaires;

Putting the welfare of the public and minimising the impact on their daily spending as core elements of concession agreements; and

Not to tax the public with extra payments if the government can bear the costs of national projects.

Though praising Najib for realising the need to takeover the EDL concession based on best economic practices as outlined by the Pakatan document for the good of the people, Rafizi warned that the takeover could be used to smuggle the rakyat's money into the coffers of BN cronies.

He noted that MRCB, which operates the EDL concession, is closely linked with Umno and that the sale of national assets and concessions to business tycoons seen to be close to the ruling coalition at a discount have been raised before.

Rafizi said PKR would move a parliamentary motion to moot the formation of a select committee to study all purchases of major assets from companies to ensure transparency and fairness.

PKR also challenged the government to list down more highways that could be taken over, based on the proposal mooted in the Buku Jingga, which Rafizi claimed Najib had based the EDL take-over on.