

PKR's Sivarasa clarifies time frame on Anwar pledge
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By Terence Netto

PKR Subang MP Sivarasa Rasiah last night clarified that a statement attributed to opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim to the effect that Hindraf's blueprint for the Indian poor would be implemented by a federally empowered Pakatan Rakyat within 100 days was "not quite accurate."

Anwar was quoted by Malaysiakini as saying so in response to a question before a crowd of about 1,500 people, overwhelmingly Indian, in Shah Alam on Thursday night.

The question-and-answer session was organised by news portal Semparuthi, with four Tamil newspapers - Tamil Nesan, Thinakural, Makkal Osai and Malaysia Nanban - also contributing to the holding of the session.

Sivarasa (left), who was present at the session, clarified what Anwar had actually said was that he would solve the problem of stateless residents in 100 days.

"He was referring to one point of the Hindraf blueprint on the Indian poor which demands that stateless Indians be given citizenship with all deliberate speed," clarified Sivarasa.

"Anwar's reference to 100 days was in respect of a time frame for a solution to the problem of statelessness among long-time residents of this country of whom a distressingly large number are Indians," explained the PKR federal legislator.

"If you look at some of the points in the Hindraf blueprint which require a medium to long-term span for their implementation, it is obvious these plans cannot be implemented within 100 days - that is too short a duration for the execution of policies aimed at alleviating the targeted problems," he added.

'100-day figure was misconstrued'

The PKR lawyer reminded that Anwar had in the recent past said he would resolve the problem of stateless residents within a month, but at the session in Shah Alam two nights ago, Sivarasa said Anwar lengthened the time frame to 100 days "because that's a more realistic span within which the stateless can become citizens."

"Somehow that 100-day figure was misconstrued to refer to aspects of the Hindraf blueprint which require for their fulfillment a span running to years rather than days," he expatiated.

He said the main thrust of Anwar's responses to questions at Thursday night's session was the seriousness of the Pakatan Rakyat commitment to the socio-economic uplift of the Indian poor, a cause espoused by Hindraf and empathised by the opposition coalition Anwar

leads.

"We in Pakatan are determined to alleviate the plight of the Malaysian poor, of which the Indian poor comprise a percentage wholly disproportionate to the race's presence in the overall population.

"This is scandalous and we will address the problem with urgency through the measures outlined in our Buku Jingga," Sivarasa stressed.

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