

Terengganu lost under tonnes of funds, charges Rafizi

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By Koh Jun Lin

PKR director of strategy Rafizi Ramli slammed the Terengganu government for supposedly having accumulated too much money but without any clue on how to go about using it.

Therefore, he said, at a ceramah in Kampung Air Terjun, Kuala Besut last night that the funds end up wasted on projects such as zoos and over-engineered bridges.

This is despite Terengganu being among the richest states in Malaysia and contradictorily among with the highest poverty rate.

However, if PAS wins the Kuala Besut by-election, resulting in a hung assembly, he said Pakatan Rakyat would be in a position to give input on government policy no matter the menteri besar - including his ideas.

"I am a son of Terengganu - born in Besut and growing up in Kemaman. Tonight, (PAS vice president) Husam Musa and (PAS elections director) Dr Hatta Ramli, you all are here, and even the reporters are here.

"I promise the people of Kuala Besut that if we win 16-16 (in the state assembly), I will give my full time, cooperation and focus to help develop Terengganu and help the people of Terengganu in the form of ideas," he told the audience of about 400, who broke into cries of 'Takbir!' (Praise to Allah).

rafizi ceramah at kuala besut 200713 01Rafizi (left), a former Petronas accounting department senior manager pointed out that Terengganu collects about RM2 billion annually from oil revenue alone.

"Our problem is that when it reaches the state government, the money is there but not the ideas on how to spend it, so they build zoos," he said.

Poverty eradication tops agenda

He pledged that once there is a hung assembly in Terengganu, Pakatan Rakyat would force the government - whomever it may be - to eradicate poverty.

Of the RM2 billion revenue, he estimated that it would cost about RM30 million per month (RM360 million annually) to top off the income of poor households, pushing

them above the RM763 per month poverty line.

petronas petrol oil facility in terengganu kerteh 141108 01This is based on the assumption that there are 100,000 poor households in Terengganu, needing an average of RM300 in additional income to be lifted above the poverty line.

In addition, the Pandan MP pledged that Pakatan Rakyat would pressure the government to build 5,000 units of affordable housing per year and subsidise it with up to RM20,000 each, since Terengganu has vast tracts of land but limited number of houses.

He also said Kuala Besut would be made into a 'National Fisheries Industry Zone' with incentives for factories to be set up here, creating jobs and packaging the fishermen's catch for international markets such as China, Japan and the USA.

At the same time, the fishermen would be provided licences and financing for deep-sea fishing, he added.

"If you ask us, we have like 1,000 suggestions to help the poor. We can eradicate poverty. We can give free or highly subsidised housing. We can turn Kuala Besut into a National Fisheries Centre. We can give deep-sea fishing boats. We can prepare facilities for packing fishes.

"However, all these can only happen if we attain 16-16," he said.

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