

'Cut useless gov't trips if serious about savings'

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Keen to make those in power share the burden of fiscal consolidation, PKR's Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli has suggested that the government should take away yet another perk enjoyed by the top guns.

In a statement today, he said that - on top of paying for their own petrol as was earlier suggested - those in power should also take fewer business trips to ensure more bang for the government's buck.

"Cut allocations for domestic and overseas travel for ministers, deputy ministers, their officers and top civil servants by 25 percent immediately to avoid trips that do not benefit the government," he said.

Another way to save money, he said, is to embrace the digital age and stop sending "expensive invitation cards via Poslaju" to MPs, civil servants and other guests for government programmes.

Appending a government invitation he received for a Malaysia Day event, he said this can be done free of charge via email or social media.

"These three steps can generate savings of millions of ringgit of taxpayers' funds every year if implemented immediately," he said.

"I am waiting for (Prime Minister) Najib Abdul Razak to give the instructions, if it is true that he is really concerned about the difficulties faced by the rakyat due to his decision to cut fuel subsidy."

According to a parliamentary reply, Najib's overseas trips had cost the government RM44 million over the past five years.

Urging the government to inform Parliament about its plans trim the fat, Rafizi (right) also called for a progress report every three months as per corporate practice.

The fuel subsidy cut of 20 sen per litre last week is estimated to save the government RM1.1 billion, but it has said the savings will be spent on more targeted subsidies for the poor.

Rafizi, who is also PKR director of strategy, had earlier challenged Umno Youth chief and Rembau MP Khairy Jamaluddin to a debate on fuel prices in Malaysia. However, Khairy declined, saying that the debate can take place in the Dewan Rakyat instead.

To this, Rafizi urged Khairy, who is also Youth and Sports Minister, to submit a motion to the Dewan Rakyat speaker to debate the matter in the House.

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