

Minister: Pakatan forms have 'race', too
MalaysiaKini.com
May 8, 2014

As the government clarifies it will not drop the 'race' column from official forms, cabinet minister Abdul Rahman Dahlan stresses that such columns are not necessarily a bad thing.

To illustrate his point, Rahman said even Pakatan Rakyat, whose representatives have also previously sought to do away with such columns, find such data important.

As evidence, Rahman, who is housing and local government minister, tweeted several forms from PKR and the Pakatan-led Penang and Selangor governments which have 'race' columns.

"The race identity is not intended to be used for negative racial profiling. The race identity is intended to collect valuable statistics so that government social programmes and policies are targeted and accurate.

"Why is race identity important to government? Just ask Selangor. Despite their rhetoric, their forms have race column as well.

"Even the so-called multiracial PKR. Its membership form requires you to identify your race. So go figure!" Rahman tweeted today.

To this, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng replied on Twitter that the state is "subject to federal government rules under a centralised system".

PKR Communications Director Fahmi Fadzil also rebutted Abdul Rahman by saying that the 'race' columns on the PKR form is optional.

"(Abdul Rahman)'s argument is weak. 1) In Keadilan's membership form, the keturunan (ethnicity) entry is not compulsory. 2) It's open-ended, not pre-selected choices.

"(It is) up to you to fill in or not. Fundamentally different argument from government forms," he tweeted.

Single national identity

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today clarified that cabinet has not decided to do away with the race column in official forms, as reported by the media.

Najib said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Joseph Entulu, who was quoted by the media as saying that the cabinet decided to do away with the column, will issue an a

statement on his mistake.

“For the sake of statistics, we need it (the race column). Otherwise, we will not have the statistics (by race),” Najib said in Taiping today.

In February, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of unity Joseph Kurup suggested that Malaysia remove 'race' columns from official forms in a bid to create a single national identity.

This was lauded by PKR's Sarawak chief Baru Bian, who said that it is a move in the right direction.

In January, DAP's Subang Jaya assemblyperson Hannah Yeoh had sought for one's race not be included on the MyKad.

Although a person's race is not printed on the MyKad, the information is available in the embedded chip.

Yeoh had in 2011 failed in her attempt to register her newborn daughter's race as 'anak Malaysia'.

Her daughter is of mixed parentage but the options provided by the National Registration Department do not reflect that.

DAP representatives from Sabah have also previously sought the scrapping of 'race' column.