

DAP: Najib came, saw, and left the homeless
MalaysiaKini.com
July 11, 2014

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's walkabout on Wednesday to view the homeless around Kuala Lumpur was nothing but a publicity stunt, said DAP parliamentarian Lim Lip Eng.

“The prime minister’s visit did not bring about any real benefit but was a mere publicity act that only helped in raising his party’s image, which had already been tarnished,” he said in a statement yesterday.

The Segambut MP (right) said Najib did not know exactly what he was doing and visited the homeless for the sake of it.

“I was astonished that the purpose of the prime minister’s visit is just to see their living conditions, and let them be without doing anything about it... what is to happen to their (homeless) fate after his inspection?” Lim asked.

He added Najib has not taken any concrete actions in helping the homeless since the visit despite making multiple promises over the past few years.

“The prime minister and BN have not actually done much to reduce the burden of the homeless other than making announcements and promises to do this and that,” he said.

The prime minister paid the homeless around Kuala Lumpur a surprise visit on Wednesday, following a public outcry over the government’s decision to ban soup kitchens from operating around the city centre.

Federal Territories Minister Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor last week announced that soup kitchens would be barred from distributing food to the homeless within two kilometres of the Lot 10 shopping mall in Jalan Bukit Bintang.

Those giving alms to beggars in the city are also to be fined, claiming it to be part of the government's move to improve the city's "image".

Action an afterthought?

Critics pointed out the heartlessness of the government's move made during the holy month of Ramadan, a period of fasting and good practices, and opposition MPs went to help out at a soup kitchen in the city to show solidarity.

The endless outcry eventually prompted Najib to tweet that Tengku Adnan will rectify the situation and that the government cared for the fate of the homeless.

The enforcement of the ban was subsequently postponed until next month, after the Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebrations.

The Federal Territories Ministry also said that the ban will be only be implemented on mobile soup kitchens, while soup kitchens with permanent premises will be allowed to continue operations.

In addition, the ministry said that it will organise a laboratory and invite the NGOs to participate in mapping out a short and long-term plan on the issue.

Najib yesterday also announced that the government will open a shelter in the capital to provide the homeless with showers, sleeping cubicles and lockers. It will be ready in six months.

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, who is also Penang chief minister, also visited a soup kitchen on July 8 and was photographed shedding tears over the plight of the homeless

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/268397>