

Rohani: DAP MP making a mountain out of a molehill
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Women, Family and Community minister Rohani Abd Karim has ticked off the DAP for trying to politicise the homeless issue in its favour.

She said that she did not reply to DAP's Serdang MP Ong Kian Ming's request to visit a halfway home for the homeless, not because she does not want him to come.

Instead, Rohani (left) said, she and her team have been busy with Ramadan events.

Contacted by Malaysiakini, she also stands by her statement that opposition politicians are still welcome to visit the centre.

"It's not to say we don't want to reply, we are looking for a suitable time to reply with proposed dates for the visit as I want to be there," said the Batang Lupar MP, who is currently in her constituency.

She also said that Ong was trying to make a big deal about it by releasing a media statement when it has been barely a few weeks since he sent the request.

"Just because once or twice I do not reply, that does not mean I am not bothered. Please do not blow up this issue"

She added that the likening Ops Qaseh to Internal Security Act 1960 (ISA) is "harsh" and politicises the whole issue.

"There is a lot of misconception towards it (Ops Qaseh), it is completely different from ISA. We are here to help people, not lock them in cells," she said.

Held against their will in shelters

Earlier, Ong (below) in a press statement complained that Rohani did not reply to his June 23 request visit a halfway home for the homeless in Sungai Buloh, Selangor.

He said that even though Rohani Abdul Karim told reporters that opposition politicians are welcome to drop in, his written request to visit on July 7 remains unanswered.

"Until today, despite the minister's promise in the Star newspaper to welcome us (opposition parties) to have a look, I have not received any positive response," he claimed.

Ong added that the purpose of the visit is to ensure the residents of Desa Bina Diri are well

taken care off and facilities are adequate.

The visit is also to scrutinise if their requirements like documentation, jobs, healthcare and transition from homelessness is properly managed by the authorities.

Ong also stressed the need for an immediate visit after receiving reports of some residents being "held against their will".

The Malay Mail Online today reported that residents of the centre Sungai Buloh are pleading to be released and are not allowed home during festive seasons.

According to the article, over 34 people are being held there pending their transfer to welfare homes or centres outside Kuala Lumpur.

The residents were disgruntled over the lack of care, deprived of amenities like mobile phones and being their livelihood being disrupted.

Ong had earlier said the use of Destitute Persons Act to keep homeless people in shelter homes against their will for up to six years is like reviving the repealed ISA.

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