

Don't kick us when we're down, wails MCA
MalaysiaKini.com
Aug 4, 2014

MCA has hit back at Tourism Minister Nazri Aziz for making fun of the Chinese-based party for siding with foreign labourers working as cooks instead of with the locals.

"It is uncalled for that a senior cabinet minister such as himself has reacted in this manner towards a component partner when it is down.

"Is Nazri even able to hear out and accept the views of hawkers who oppose Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng's proposal?

"If not, then how can he dismiss MCA Youth's views when he rejects the opinions of the common man on the street? Or is he using this opportunity to run down MCA?" MCA central committee member Ti Lian Ker asked in a statement today.

Yesterday Nazri, who was in Penang for the George Town Festival, ticked MCA off for incessantly criticising the Penang government for attempting to rid local hawkers of foreign cooks.

The state said this was in the interest of preserving the authenticity of the state's world famous local cuisine, that is its main tourist draw.

Nazri derided MCA, saying "the party does not represent the rakyat" and that it had "truly lost its direction" in lobbying for the foreign labourers instead of the Penang hawkers.

Nazri and MCA has been in a tiff over the hawker issue after the party berated the minister for giving Lim's move his nod of approval.

'Stand by us as we stood by you'

Ti lashed out at Nazri, who was formerly an Umno supreme council member, for "hitting below the belt" and quickly forgetting MCA's loyalty when Umno was also once down.

He added that BN contested elections on a "collective effort" formula and no single component party should be faulted for poor election performance.

"Need I remind Nazri that Umno too had its own downside during the 1999 Reformasi period led by Anwar Ibrahim and in February 1988 when Umno was declared illegal?

"However, unlike Nazri, who has deserted MCA Youth, it was MCA that stood steadfast in supporting a fellow partner and galvanising Chinese supporters to vote for BN," Ti said.

He also urged Nazri (left) to “show some class”.

Ti also defended MCA’s record in helping create jobs for Malaysians through micro-credit and soft loans to small- and medium-sized enterprises, along with its regular dialogues with trade associations.

He said Nazri perhaps did not understand that the issue had to do with a tight labour market.

The Penang hawkers could not find local cooks, which was why they resorted to hiring foreigners to help boost their businesses.

The statement ended with Ti also challenging the logic of the arguments of Nazri and Lim that only Malaysians can whip up excellent Penang dishes.

“How can Malaysian Hainanese chefs obtain the skills of preparing Western dishes which they are renowned for, or that Malaysians have opened Japanese restaurants in Malaysia, or even our own local Malaysians who can whip up a fish and chips meal?

“On a larger extent, will Penang now ban all Malaysian hawkers who serve Western cuisine?” he asked.

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Source <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/270517>