

## **Why lash PTPTN debtors, but not BN cronies?**

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Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin must explain to the younger generation why National Higher Education Fund (PTPTN) borrowers are being blacklisted for failing to repay their loans but individuals linked to BN are given millions of ringgit that is waived.

PKR's Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli said this today in reference to Khairy's change of stance to support PTPTN's move to list defaulters in the Central Credit Reference Information System (CCRIS), which puts them in a black record when dealing with any bank in the country.

"Khairy must explain to the youth why Umno/BN does not blacklist or use similar high-handed measures against their cronies and businesspersons who owe the government much more than the accumulated amount (PTPTN) is trying to recoup using CCRIS," Rafizi said in a statement.

PTPTN is trying to collect RM1.2 billion from some 170,000 borrowers who have defaulted in their loan repayments from 1998 to 2010.

Rafizi used the example of former Malaysia Airlines chairperson Tajuddin Ramli, whose RM600 million debt was waived by the government, and the outstanding RM250 million government loan to former minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's family for the failed National Feedlot Centre project.

He said the government also appeared to have no qualms in giving out compensation to toll concessionaires and gas subsidies to independent power producers.

"I believe the people in general are angry when the government, through PTPTN, uses high-handed measures to collect debts amounting to only few thousand ringgit from the ordinary rakyat.

"Such action is not seen to be taken against big borrowers from among cronies that are several times larger than the amount by PTPTN borrowers," he said.

Rafizi said while he agreed that the outstanding debt had to be collected, he disagreed listing defaulters in CCRIS and called for a more "moral" approach to the matter.

The government should instead focus on collecting the debt from defaulters who have a disposable income of more than RM1,000.

Failing this, he said, their names could be published in the newspapers, as is the practice with Petronas and Mara in collecting back their education loans.

"Using CCRIS victimises the rakyat, particularly in the current pressing economic situation," Rafizi added.

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