

DAP: Why compare us with backward nations?

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Putrajaya's tendency of comparing Malaysia to backward nations to hide the fact that the country has fallen behind may one day put it among the ranks of underdeveloped African nations, warns Seputeh MP Teresa Kok.

She said this in reference to the statement yesterday by Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry executive director Stewart Forbes that Putrajaya often chooses the worst examples in making comparisons with Malaysia.

"Putrajaya simply cannot explain or justify to Malaysians why it has lagged far behind nations like South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore.

"If the BN government does not do what is right and necessary, the day may just come that the nations it will use as comparison are no more Thailand and Vietnam but some underdeveloped nations in Africa," Kok said in a statement today.

She said Putrajaya has often shied away from comparing Malaysia with countries such as South Korea, even though Malaysia had a higher gross domestic product up to 1980.

Forbes (left) told a forum in Kuala Lumpur yesterday that Malaysia was 19 years behind South Korea in terms of productivity, as a result of corruption, leakages, complacency and archaic labour laws.

"South Korea had left Malaysia far behind. It was after the South Korean democratisation process in 1987 that the South Korean economy reached an entirely new level of innovation.

"Malaysia certainly has a lot to catch up on and the first thing that the federal government must have is the political will to combat corruption and leakages," Kok said.

However, she said BN appeared to lack the political will as seen in 2015 Budget, which is silent on matters of corruption and leakages.

'BN not serious about political reforms'

"Neither is the BN government serious or committed to political reforms, as evidenced by the recent political crackdown against government critics and opposition lawmakers by way of selective prosecution under the Sedition Act," she said.

Kok said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak can no longer remain silent and she urged him to respond to the matter.

Meanwhile, in his Deepavali message today, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng questioned why it was so “difficult” to implement open competitive tenders, public declaration of assets by elected officials in the government administration and barring close family members of leaders from doing business with the government.

“If it can be done by Pakatan Rakyat in Penang, why can’t it be done by the federal government?”

Lim also questioned why Malaysia had chosen the “worst” countries to make comparisons with in terms of workers’ productivity.

“Putrajaya’s shocking inability to answer has caused it to turn to and rely on socio-political engineers to focus on emotional, ethnic and religious hatred as well as bare-faced lies to distract attention from the need to address the real problems.

“For this reason, the leaders who have failed are asking for the revival of preventive laws, not against those who are responsible for oppression and corruption but against those who voice out against such injustices,” Lim added.

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