

PKR: Gov't should help with no strings attached
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Amid the devastating floods in the PAS-stronghold of Kelantan, the concept of a coalition government has been floated again.

Ironically, the proposal was not mooted by a politician but a corporate figure who hails from the state.

However, PKR secretary-general Rafizi Ramli dismissed this argument, saying if the federal government subscribed to universal values, this issue would not arise.

The lawmaker pointed out the federal government represented all Malaysians and should not discriminate those who voted against the ruling coalition.

“The federal government’s values should be based on compassion, if so, this notion of political amalgamation does not arise.

“It doesn’t matter who the people of Kelantan support, it is incumbent on both the federal and state governments to help,” he told Malaysiakini.

Rafizi was responding to the comment by owner of the Malay newspaper Sinar Harian, Hussamuddin Yaakob.

The latter had said that traditional foes PAS and Umno must join hands to rebuild the flood-ravaged state.

Describing this as the only solution, Hussamuddin warned that the people would suffer further if the two parties continue to be at loggerheads.

Rafizi said a responsible government would aid the victims and redevelop the state without taking partisan politics into consideration.

“The federal government should be compassionate. There should be no conditions. Otherwise, it would be an abdication of responsibility,” he added.

Rafizi also advised Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to heed the words of US President Barack Obama who once said he acknowledges the voice of those who did not vote for him.

Sceptical of ‘Malay’ unity

Hussamuddin’s suggestion drew mixed responses from PAS and Umno leaders.

While PAS vice-president Husam Musa dismissed it, former Kelantan Umno chief Anuar Musa however welcomed such a move.

Pouring fuel into the speculation furnace, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin also did not discount the possibility.

Meanwhile, Rafizi also delved further into the concept of a coalition government, especially when the argument is premised on race.

“I have always been sceptical of unity not based on principles.

“The notion that Malays have to unite already gives a bad connotation that Malays are weak, and have to put principles aside for racial unity,” he said.

What is important, according to the PKR leader, are universal principles of respect, good governance, truth and justice which transcends race.

“If all leaders can agree on this, unity does not arise,” he said.

'Pointless responding to Gerakan'

On a related matter, Rafizi refused to be drawn into a mudslinging match with Gerakan Youth chief Tan Keng Liang who had taken a potshot against PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim for not rushing back to the flood-hit country from the latter's holiday.

“I think Anwar will rush to Kelantan after hearing the Kelantan PAS government may form a unity government with BN to redevelop the state,” the latter had tweeted.

However Rafizi laughed this off saying, “That is how he (Tan) thinks.”

Prior to this, Umno division leader Syed Ali Alhabshee had criticised Anwar for not cancelling his vacation in New Zealand and returning to Malaysia due to the floods.

This was in response to the opposition's criticism of Najib for earlier continuing his holiday in Hawaii despite the devastating flood crisis at home.

Najib had earlier posted on his Facebook his concern and that he had called home to show his concern, but the posting drew scorn from thousands of netizens, forcing the PM to abandon his holiday and fly back to Kelantan.