

KJ, declaring assets to PM doesn't count

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Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin's claims that BN leaders had already declared their assets by making such asset declaration to the Prime Minister and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) is a sham perversion of the concept of public declaration of assets, and is contrary to internationally accepted anti-corruption practices.

Failing to make public declaration of assets is akin to failure to establish integrity in leadership by blocking public accountability, transparency and scrutiny.

Declaration of assets made to the prime minister by ministers or chief ministers have shown to be completely ineffective in establishing integrity in leadership or curbing corruption.

In contrast, public declaration of assets is much more effective by either prosecuting in court those wrongdoers or using public pressure to shame and hound from public office, those who accumulate extraordinary wealth.

By failing to make public declaration of assets leaves the unfortunate impression that BN leaders have something to hide.

There is nothing to fear in making public declaration of assets if one has no ill-gotten or unexplained wealth. Personal fears of private safety or their family members if the minister publicly declares his or her assets have proven to be unfounded.

The experience of Penang which became the first and only state in Malaysia to publicly declare the assets of chief ministers, exco members and state assemblymen, which were then periodically updated, have shown that there were no threats to the person declaring their assets or their family members.

Lavish lifestyles need explaining

Would any BN minister dare to ask the people whether the rakyat are opposed public declaration of assets?

The public's demand call for transparency and public accountability has become more urgent following revelation of the lavish lifestyle of the family members of top BN leaders from the prime minister, ministers right down to the chief ministers with luxury apartments in developed western countries.

Further, the purchase of luxury jets for the use of BN government leaders, when BN has refused to cancel or postpone the implementation of GST has only widened the income inequality caused by GST.

A public declaration of assets will enable BN leaders to prove that they also feel the rakyat's pain of the more difficult economic conditions.

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