

'Gov't resorting to sophistry, not solid facts'

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The government's claim that it has rendered RM2.89 billion in aid to Indian Malaysians between 2012 and 2014 is so much mumbo jumbo, said a DAP leader.

MP for Ipoh Barat M Kulasegaran described the disclosure by Treasury secretary-general Mohd Irwan Siregar Abdullah that a sum of RM2.89 billion was given in aid of projects for the community between 2012 and 2014 as "sophistry, not solid facts".

"The secretary-general has lumped operating expenditure with development estimates and toted up the lot as aid to the Indian community," said the federal legislator.

"Next thing you know, the government will say the MP's allowance it pays me monthly is included under the overall estimates of aid to Indians," cracked the national vice-chair of the DAP.

"Perhaps the government underestimates the intelligence of the Indian community and thinks that whatever it dishes out as explanation will be swallowed hook, line and sinker," he elaborated in jest.

He said the community does not lack discernment and wants to know what has happened to the RM50 million allocated for the training of 3,200 Indian youths in Budget 2013.

He said only 1,000 were trained, prompting Indians to ask if the allocation was expended in full or in part, which would explain the shortfall in the number trained.

Further, Kulasegaran (photo) said the community wanted to evaluate the progress on the seven benchmarks that former MIC president S Samy Vellu set for the fulfilment of government pledges of aid to the Indian community.

These were a more equitable participation in the stock market, higher intake into public universities, higher intake into the public sector and brighter promotion prospects, increased government scholarships, greater access to entrepreneurship training and micro-credit loans, an effective urban poverty eradication scheme, and a dedicated mechanism to monitor the delivery of public services to the community.

"The community lags in the attainment of these benchmarks such that the resort to sophistry, not solid facts is seen as more hoodwinking of a people whose vote was so often in the pocket of the BN only to be taken for granted at every turn," lamented Kulasegaran.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/299019>