

'PM, don't dream of being a Bugis warrior'

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By Radzi Razak

Former deputy finance minister Dr Affifuddin Omar raised much laughter at a forum when he called on Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to stop dreaming he is a Bugis warrior.

The Bugis are known more as sea bandits, not warriors, he said at a forum titled 'Looking for the New Malaysian Leader' in Petaling Jaya today.

He said Najib's reiteration that he will not surrender amidst criticisms because he is a brave Bugis warrior actually sounds hollow if the PM does not answer the allegations put out to him.

"The Bugis are not really good in warfare. The ones who are good are the Achehnese. Now the Achehs are quiet.

"The Bugis only travelled the sea and raided everything.

"Don't dream of becoming Bugis warrior. I too could bring up my Minang ancestry," he told the audience.

Affifudin, who is still an Umno member, said the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) issues that were raised today could well mean the end of both Najib and Umno.

"The ones who came to support him (Najib) are division leaders. But as a grassroots Umno member who go around, I know what happened (on the ground), especially at the Rompin by-election. The signs are not good," he said.

Why other big names 'silent'?

Affifuddin (photo) supported the call by Mahathir to call for a forensic audit on the company's account and not just reports from both auditor general and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

He said his experience as the PAC chief taught him that the committee has no power whatsoever to make independent and impactful accounts investigation on the debt-ridden company.

"When I was the PAC chief, we don't do forensic accounting. We only discussed the auditor general's report. If they ask the auditor to hide it, we can't do anything.

"The PAC scope is limited. We don't have the power to summon people and we don't have the power to prosecute," he said.

He also asked why only Najib is forced to answer every allegation regarding 1MDB as there are other leaders who are involved more intimately with the company's dealings.

Affifuddin, who was holding the 1MDB company information sheet, said there are other 'giants' who are members of the 1MDB board and acting as advisors.

"I see many Tan Sris and Datuks here. Why do they keep quiet? They should be investigated as well. These corporate giants just kept quiet. Why (have) they never answered (allegations about 1MDB)?" he said.

'Best leader is Tun Razak'

At today's forum entitled 'Searching for the New Malaysia Leader', Affifuddin, along with co-panelists former Selangor menteri besar Muhammad Taib and former de facto law minister Zaid Ibrahim, outlined their criteria for future prime ministers.

In his presentation, Affifuddin said Malaysians, especially Muslims, should not think of their leaders in the traditional mould, by comparing them with Prophet Muhammad, caliph Umar Abdul Aziz, or Sultan Muhammad al-Fateh of the Ottoman Empire.

He said Malaysian leaders should know about economics, to spur Malaysia forward to achieve developed nation status, but also be close to the people.

"To me, the best leader is Tun Abdul Razak (photo). He is not rich.

"He did not even have 'cukong' (politician-backed businessmen). He didn't have Vincent Tan, Yeoh Tiong Lay, Syed Mokhtar (al-Bukhary). He doesn't even have a Jho Low," he said, drawing much laughter from the audience.