

**PAS: Don't let Tharmendran become another PI Bala**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**July 19, 2010**

PAS has urged the federal government to ensure the safety of former RMAF sergeant N Tharmendran who claims that he is being threatened by former colleagues over the jet-engine theft scandal.

"I don't want Tharmendran to suffer the same fate of eyewitnesses in other high-profile cases, who were forced to flee the country for their safety," PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub told a press conference at the party headquarters in Kuala Lumpur today.

NONE Salahuddin (left) was making a veiled reference to the circumstances of private investigator P Balasubramaniam who claimed he was forced into exile after implicating Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his wife Rosmah Mansor in the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu.

Tharmendran's parents had alleged that their son was tortured by RMAF officials to confess to the charge of stealing two F5 fighter jet engines.

After his release on bail, Tharmendran went into hiding after apparent attempts by RMAF officials to take him to an airbase, although he is technically now a civilian.

Tharmendran is facing charges of theft and abetment to theft of two fighter-jet engines from Subang Air Force base in December 2007.

"The authorities should make sure the key witness is safe in his own country," he added.

The party vice-president also called for a royal commission to investigate the high-profile case.

"I doubt that the case can be heard in normal court. It should be investigated by a royal commission as the members of such a commission would be more reliable in unearthing what went wrong."

Salahuddin said it would be impossible for a low-ranking RMAF member to steal the jet engines.

Price hike based on Pemandu recommendations?

In a separate development, party vice-president Mahfuz Omar questioned whether the upward price adjustments introduced by the premier are based on the recommendations put forward by the Treasury and the Performance and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) CEO Idris Jala.

"If there is a surplus of RM10 billion from the country's budget as claimed by the second finance minister (Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah), then why the need to introduce subsidy cuts and price hikes?" he asked.

NONE He also questioned whether the formula introduced by the subsidy rationalisation lab conducted by Idris would be implemented continuously.

Mahfuz (right) added that low-income earners would suffer if the prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas go up every six months as suggested.

"If an increase of five sen would have a minimal impact on the people, then the government should not increase prices as five sen is nothing for them as well," he added.

Pemandu had issued a grave warning by claiming that the county would become bankrupt by 2019 if the subsidies are not slashed.

Some well-known economists, however, argued that it would be ridiculous to subscribe to a formula that indicated Malaysia will be condemned to bankruptcy.

More powers for MACC?

On an unrelated matter, Salahuddin called the government to look into the proposals by the special committee on corruption that were tabled in Parliament on July 13.

He said if the government is concerned over the increase in corruption cases, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) should be given prosecutorial powers.

"The constitution should allow the commissioner to charge high-profile figures," he added.

He explained that, under the current system the cases will be transferred to the attorney-general's chambers which is under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's Department.

"With this, cases of high-profile figures can easily be dropped without any charges being (preferred)," he added.

The special committee, headed by Kangar parliamentarian and former home minister Mohd Radzi Syeikh Ahmad, had also detailed the inadequate funding provided to MACC; the need to establish an anti-corruption service commission; and the shortage of MACC officers.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/137709>