

KL on hardcore poor 'list of shame'
Malaysiakini.com
August 05, 2010

Segambut parliamentarian Lim Lip Eng expressed his shame and bafflement that Malaysia's capital of Kuala Lumpur is included in the list of hardcore poor-hit cities.

NONEThis, he said, is according to written answers he received from both Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing Minister Raja Nong Chik Raja Zainal Abidin on the cities identified as hardcore poor areas.

Lip Eng (right, in pic) said that he submitted his questions in April prior to the last Parliament session and received both answers via post last week.

“How can KL, which was just ranked as among the top meeting destinations in the world, have hardcore poor?,” asked the DAP elected representative during a press conference at his service centre in Segambut today.

Yesterday, English daily the Star reported that the International Congress and Convention Association had placed Malaysia 22nd in its rankings for most preferred cities for conventions and meetings worldwide, making it one of the highest ranked cities in the Asia Pacific as a meeting destination.

Lip Eng expressed concern that the answers did not give any details as to what criteria was used to label an areas as hardcore poor-hit and pointed out certain glaring differences between the two ministerial answers.

'Answers raise more questions'

“The answers raised a lot more questions,” said the Segambut MP.

He distributed copies of both answers to reporters and pointed to the different data given. Raja Nong Chik's answer said there are 135 hardcore poor areas while the PM's answer stated 92.

poverty malayBoth answers, he added, gave no further details in the number of hardcore poor or why the areas are considered hardcore poor.

The PM's answer, he said, listed areas of hardcore poor which made up the majority of the populated areas in all 13 states and two federal territories of Kuala Lumpur and Labuan.

“Looking at this, I can safely say that Malaysia is a country of hardcore poor,” he quipped.

However, if the answer are true, added the parliamentarian, then Malaysia is no different than a third world country and the government should really work hard to alleviate this problem before things become worse.

indian malaysia poverty“The 2020 KL City Plan is to increase population density. I wonder if they increase the population, will they be able to help the hardcore poor?”

“I believe it will only increase the number of the poor,” he opined.

He urged the government to solve the problem of Kuala Lumpur hardcore poor in the near term before going on record calling Malaysia a successful and prosperous country.

Learn from Tawau, Penang

“It is not hard to do, if the PM or Raja Nong Chik does not know how to do it I can refer them to people

that can help.”

azlanHe explained that he was referring to the mayor of Tawau and Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng who, he said, have both managed to overcome hardcore poverty in their areas.

He quoted a Bernama report last Sunday that Tawau is the first hardcore poor-free area in Sabah. This was reported only two months after Tawau was still in the hardcore poverty list updated up to June.

Similarly, he said, Guan Eng had claimed late last year that hardcore poverty has been eradicated in Penang.

“How can Tawau do in two months and Penang in three years since Pakatan took over, what the federal government has failed to do after more than 50 years in power?” asked Lip Eng.

However, in the answers provided by the prime minister and Raja Nong Chik, major districts and towns in Penang, including Georgetown, as well as Tawau are still listed as places plagued by hardcore poverty.

According to Lip Eng, since the answers accounted for data gathered up until June, Tawau may have changed its status by now.

As for Penang, Lip Eng contends that he is more inclined to believe Guan Eng's claim that the state is hardcore poor free since exact figures and details were provided, unlike the vague ministerial answers which simply named cities and districts.

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