

**Bonus + subsidy cuts make no sense: Khalid
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Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad has questioned how the federal government is managing the nation's finances by its disbursement of over RM900 million in Hari Raya cash handouts to civil servants.

He said while he supported measures to give civil servants more spending money to spur domestic consumption, the move worked against the cost-saving measures outlined in the subsidy rationalisation plan.

He said it did no justice to the poor and needy, who were deprived of the financial support afforded by subsidies.

"It looks like you take from the poor, people in the kampung with no salaries or pensions, and suddenly you give to those who earn salaries and pensions," he told a press conference at his office in Shah Alam today.

"Again, I support the Hari Raya handouts but this amounts to over RM900 million, which is more than the RM750 million they wanted to save from the subsidy cuts."

Khalid said the federal government's "generosity" looked more like an effort at not losing face with the Selangor and Penang governments, which promised a similar Aidilfitri bonus to civil servants in the two states.

The two Pakatan Rakyat-led state governments could afford to spend, he said, as they had better governance with surplus budgets supported by efficient management.

'Low blow'

Khalid had only disdain for Selangor Malay Chamber of Commerce head and Syabas chairperson Rozali Ismail, calling him an "ungracious host" for attacking the Selangor government at a recent breaking-of-fast event.

He said Rozali's attack against Selangor Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim was a low blow as he chose a time when he knew that the latter could not respond.

"He invited the Sultan (of Selangor), he invited the MB and even Dzulkifli (Ahmad, PAS's Kuala Selangor MP) and myself, and then he whacked (bantai) us in his speech.

"I think he's ready to go into politics. I suggest that if this is true, he should resign from the (chamber), go full time into politics and contest in Shah Alam.

"There we will see how many Malays are supportive of his enriching himself by taking money from the pockets of the Malays."

Khalid urged the Selangor government to organise a symposium to expose Malay business owners to its brand of business culture, which values "ability and competitiveness", not cronyism and political handouts.

No reply from minister

On the fatal shooting of Aminulrashid Amzah, 14, Khalid said he was disappointed that Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein had not made any move to meet the boy's mother.

He said he had written to Hishammuddin on Aug 13, requesting that the minister meets with Aminulrashid's mother, but has yet to receive any reply.

"He was willing to meet the cow's head protesters immediately after the event. Why did he give such special attention to the protesters, but cannot do so to a mother seeking justice for her son?" Khalid asked.

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