



'Umno YBs, return your 'haram' pay cheques'
Malaysiakini.com
October 1, 2010

Pakatan Rakyat Youth has challenged the 11 Umno assemblypersons in Penang to return their pay cheques to the state, as their salaries may have come from gambling sources.

The Youth secretariat has also called on Umno to also direct all Utusan Malaysia staff to return their salaries, as they may have come from the newspaper's 4D lottery advertisements.

Furthermore, they have asked Umno to direct government-linked companies under its influence to return their salaries to the Finance Ministry as it cannot be ascertained whether they came from taxes derived from gambling, entertainment or alcohol outlets.

Penang PKR Youth secretary Syed Mikael Rizal Aidid (right) said the group was compelled to make the challenge, as Umno appeared to be hard hit by Pakatan's ability to save RM20 million for the senior citizens appreciation programme and had resorted to suggesting that the money was 'haram'.

"(Therefore) this challenge will give Umno a chance prove that they are the true champions of the Malays as they often claim to be," he said at a press conference in Prai, Penang.

"We urge Umno to truly help change the fate of the Malays by defending their ups and downs whole heartedly, and not by merely showing off in front of the TV or in the newspapers," he added.

40 return their cheques

The group was responding to the 40 Muslim senior citizens who had turned up at the doorsteps of Penang opposition leader Azhar Ibrahim to return to cash award (*below*) as they considered it 'haram'.

The issue about the source of the money not being halal was raised when Umno Information Youth chief Reezal Merican revealed in Kepala Batas that the state had issued a letter to the Penang Turf Club requesting a balance of contribution of RM500,000.

Umno asserted that letter was used as proof that the Penang government was using money derived from gambling to provide aid for Muslims.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has denied the allegations, while state exco for religious affairs Abdul Malik Abul Kassim demanded the Umno-led federal government to rid gambling dens in the country first before criticising income derived from it.

Since the launch of the Penang Pakatan programme this year, 110,000 senior citizens have registered for the award while their kin will also receive a RM1,000 one-off payment in the eventuality of their parents' death.





'Tricked by Umno'

Meanwhile, the secretariat felt that the Muslim senior citizens who returned their money to Azhar had been 'tricked and manipulated' by the Penaga assemblyperson.

DAP Youth secretary Ng Wei Aik (*left*) said Umno was prepared to forgo the rights of the people for the sake of 'cheap political popularity'.

Ng, who is also political secretary to Lim expressed "sympathy" for the elderly from Penaga, who had reportedly said they do not know who to return the money to.

"We are surprised that Umno has suddenly shown an interest in the plight of the rakyat, but what is the black and white proof that gambling money was used for the senior citizens programme?" asked the Komtar assemblyperson.

"Lim's private secretary's (Farida Hani Yacob) response to the Penang Turf Club clearly stated that its contribution is for anti-poverty activities and not for senior citizens," he added.

State exco for environment, health, welfare and caring society Phee Boon Poh has clarified that the state has an excess of RM2.4 million for anti-poverty programmes, that is separate from funds for senior citizens programme.

State financial officer Farizan Darus has reportedly backed the claim by stating that the RM2 million contribution from the Turf Club will not be used for Muslims.

"That is why we condemn the hypocrisy of Umno leaders who act as if they are well versed in religious issues, whereas they are the ones who are ignorant of it," said Penang PAS Youth secretary Mohd. Nor Harun.

"If they are really interested in saving the Muslim community from receiving money from gambling, entertainment and alcohol, we challenge them to also give up their salaries," he added.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/144122>