

Umno Youth leader: Cut salaries too
Malaysiakini.com
Jun 10, 2008
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An Umno Youth leader has proposed a 10 percent salary cut for all ministers, their deputies and civil servants in line with the government's unpopular decision to reduce fuel subsidies last week.

MCPX

sazmi miah umno youth blog launching 100608 004Sazmi Miah, an exco member, also suggested that private sector employees should accept a similar pay reduction as a gesture of solidarity.

He said this when asked to comment on whether salaries of ministers and their deputies should be slashed, in addition to the government's RM2 billion cost-cutting package announced yesterday.

"Well, it can (be) extend(ed). Civil servants and those in the private sector should take a 10 percent pay cut, put (the money) in the basket and give it back to the people," he said.

He also said it would be "better" if the government abolishes the entertainment allowances enjoyed by the ministers and their deputies.

"Ten percent is a good start, it's good intention. But if it is abolished, it would be better lah," he said.

sazmi miah umno youth blog launching 100608 003Sazmi, who chairs the newly-formed Umno Youth media liaison secretariat, was speaking to journalists in Kuala Lumpur after launching the wing's weblog Saka Bangsa (or heritage) this morning.

He held a two-hour closed-door dialogue session with about 50 journalists and bloggers as part of the wing's "friendly engagement" policy after its severe setback in the March 8 general election.

Sazmi was parliamentary secretary of the natural resource and environment ministry until he lost in the March 8 general election.

'More needs to be done'

The prime minister had announced several cost-cutting measures following the government's decision to reduce fuel subsidies with effect from June 5, which saw the petrol price going up by 41 percent.

Ministers and their deputies will take a 10 percent cut in entertainment allowance from July 1, while cabinet members will also see their annual all-expenses-paid holidays restricted with immediate effect.

lim kit siang 030606However, this has prompted criticism by DAP leader Lim Kit Siang over the "paltry cut" in entertainment allowance, as well as questions on the need for paid holidays for government leaders.

Sazmi described the measures as short-term ones, and said "more needs to be done" by the government.

He also expressed hope that such moves would not affect education services, in the wake of the higher education ministry's decision to return RM800 million of its RM18.2 billion allocation under the 9th Malaysia Plan. The money is to be channeled to more urgent needs.

"I hope the government can consider returning the RM800 million (to the ministry). We can increase 'sin taxes' for instance," he said.

He added that ordinary people are worst hit by higher fuel prices because the price of other daily essentials have been increased by "a ridiculous amount".

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