

Opposition's Denial Of Anwar Being A Liability Is To Fool People: DPM
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KUALA LUMPUR -- Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said today opposition pact leaders' denial of PKR advisor Anwar Ibrahim being a liability to PAS was an attempt to pull wool over the people's eyes.

He said the truth of the matter was that PAS, DAP and PKR did not really get along.

"Why must they issue such (denial) statements? It is plain that PAS and Anwar are working together in the opposition pact. The lesson for us is that they are playing a double game," he told reporters after chairing a meeting of the Cabinet committee on human capital development at Parliament House, here.

Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak had said yesterday that PAS's defeat in the Kerdu and Merlimau by-elections was due to, among others, the factor of Anwar being a liability to the party.

Muhyiddin was commenting on the statement by PKR Secretary-General Saifuddin Nasution today dismissing Najib's assumption and likening it to a normal political assault by the Barisan Nasional.

Saifuddin, who is the MP for Machang, had said the opposition acknowledged that Anwar was not the only factor which determined victory but the Anwar factor was relevant and significant in ensuring the strength of the opposition pact.

Muhyiddin said the opposition's defeat in the by-elections had dealt a huge blow to PAS as the presence of Anwar and other opposition leaders during the by-election campaigns had not contributed to votes for the party's candidates.

"If possible, they would have preferred Anwar to stay away. We know from our sources that they feel Anwar has become a liability. Anwar's image has been tainted.

"PAS would want to keep a distance if it could. However, Anwar thinks it is his right as the opposition leader to go down to the ground," he said.

Asked to comment on the PAS-led Kelantan government's decision not to budge from its stand on a blanket ban on gambling in the state despite DAP's call to revoke the decision, Muhyiddin said non-Muslims should be allowed to evaluate the PAS government's stand on the matter.

He said he was informed that the MCA had lodged a report with the authorities on the matter.

On Feb 28, the Kota Bharu local authority raided two bookshops in the city selling lottery tickets, raising claims that the PAS government was denying the rights of non-Muslims in the state.

(Bernama)

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