

THE SUN

DATE: 9/12/2009

Selangor wants caucus to discuss new BTN module

by **Zakiah Koya** *The Sun - 9/12/09*
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

SHAH ALAM: The Selangor government will allow state civil servants to attend National Civics Bureau or Biro Tata Negara (BTN) courses - if a caucus was formed to discuss a new module involving all parties, including the Opposition.

Mentri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim said through the caucus, a discussion could be held to decide on an effective module to fulfil the objectives of BTN; which is to inculcate patriotism towards the country.

"We will accept BTN if it does not involve the ruling political party and politics that criticise others," he told reporters after opening the Selangor Islamic Studies Convention here yesterday, reports Bernama.

He added that the caucus must include the government and all political parties in the country so that a more meaningful module could be drafted.

"I myself was involved in BTN and gave talks, so did Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (Parti Keadilan Rakyat adviser) and, in fact, Selangor PAS Commissioner Datuk Dr Hassan Ali was also among individuals involved in BTN during the early stages," he said.

Abdul Khalid said there was no denying that some of the modules included were not relevant to the objective of nation-building.

The Selangor government had on Nov 25, barred its civil servants from attending BTN courses, a decision subsequently followed by Penang on Dec 2.

In **KUALA LUMPUR**, Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said it was not enough to merely overhaul BTN courses.

"It should be completely closed down. It has been used to promote personality cult and for badgering people who oppose the leadership," said the former Umno vice-president who lost narrowly in the party presidential race against Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in April 1987.

He was speaking to reporters at a seminar on human rights held to commemorate the 61st anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Asked if his opinion had to do with the fact that participants might have been critical of him and his views during the courses, he said: "I know that I have been ridiculed. I have heard that I have been butted about in seminars and discussions (in BTN courses)."

Earlier, Razaleigh presented a speech on "Human Rights and Good Government" at the seminar.

He lamented that corruption was becoming more rampant in government circles and that this did not augur well for the observance of human rights in the country.

"Where people are in want, weak government is almost always at the heart of the problem," said Razaleigh.

In listing corruption, he stated how government transportation was used by government officers' wives to go shopping, how certain parties used secrecy as opposed to using the open tender system when awarding government projects and the flouting of the constitution to replace a legitimate government by unconstitutional and undemocratic means.

The one-day seminar, organised by the United Nations in Malaysia, was attended by diplomats, non-governmental organisations, government and UN agency officials.