

BN MP ticks off select committee on integrity
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Bede Hong

A backbencher criticised the Parliamentary Select Committee on Integrity on two counts today when debating the motion of thanks on the Royal Address.

Ronald Kiandee (BN-Beluran) described the select committee as indecisive over its "on-off approach" to hearing out whistleblower Mohd Ramli Manan over allegations against Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) head Zulkipli Mat Noor.

Zulkipli has denied all the claims in the report by former Sabah ACA director Ramli, including that he had accumulated property beyond his means, misused government property and had sexually assaulted a woman.

Yesterday, committee head Bernard Dompok delivered the 'final' of three decisions to date, saying the two would not be called up after all, in light of an on-going court case and the committee's workload.

Kiandee was also critical of "information leaks" to the media in relation to the decision-making process, saying this has wreaked havoc on the reputation of prominent figures.

"I urge the committee to finetune its mechanism to achieve its objectives. Otherwise, we would have a committee that acts as judge, prosecutor and investigator," he said.

"We don't want the committee to be used by certain parties for their political interests. My worry is that if the committee (acts selectively and with) bias, it could (create problems)."

Elaborating after a query by Bung Moktar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan), Kiandee expressed concern that details of the select committee hearings could become public knowledge via the media.

"When people are questioned, the testimony could make its way out and into blogs and newspapers... this is an apparent weakness within the select committee," he noted.

Pointing out that the committee proceedings are "not a public forum", he said cases should be discussed behind closed doors.

"The result of leaks is that a person's name will be tainted. The process of clearing one's name ... could take about a year and within that time, a lot of damage can be done."

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