

Saifuddin: BN, Pakatan should work together to pull students into politics
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By Thanusya Shanmuganathan

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5 — Barisan Nasional (BN) and its political rivals in Pakatan Rakyat (PR) should organise a forum to cajole university students into joining political parties, says deputy education minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah today.

He commended PKR's plan to infiltrate universities in its hunt for new political recruits in the spirit of recent amendments to laws on student politics but said all parties should do the same.

"I think PKR's decision is good.

"However, it will be better if BN and the opposition can organise a forum so we can approach students together and offer our best incentives," Saifuddin (picture) told reporters at sidelines of the Selangor Model United Nations Conference closing ceremony.

He added that politicians can persuade the students to join their respective parties but the final decision on which party to select should be entirely theirs to make.

Saifuddin also said one of the biggest reasons for policy failures in the country is because there is no youth empowerment.

"Young people are leaders of tomorrow and also leaders of today.

"They should be allowed to decide what to do and not forced to obey.

"We also have to provide students a platform to speak their mind," he said.

For years, he said, students have demanded for their voices to be heard, talent to be recognised, and issues to be addressed in an organised manner.

He added that no one can claim they know what today's youth go through in daily life.

"Only the youths know about the issues they face every day," he said.

On the amendment of the University and University College Act (UUCA) 1971, he said it still posts a big challenge to implement the changes in an efficient manner.

Responding to the media, he said that to date, no one has done any surveys on the effects of the UUCA on students.

PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar previously announced it will be visiting universities in September to initiate talks pertaining to students' rights to practise politics.

"Our target is to go to all universities, starting with those in the Klang Valley such as Universiti Malaya (UM)."

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