

Malaysian women won't bite on Pakatan bait, says Rafidah
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 3 — Malaysian women were not “fools” who will fall for the offers put forth by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) such as the promises of a homemakers’ savings scheme and childcare allowance, former Wanita Umno chief Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz said today.

The former minister told reporters at the inaugural Asian Business Seminar Circuit that PR’s pledges to housewives might influence those who were short-sighted, but it would not affect those who thought of their children.

“If everybody wants to play the women’s issues to win the election, then good luck to them.

“The women are not fools in the country. Don’t use us,” Rafidah said.

The Kuala Kangsar MP added that there were more issues pertaining to women that needed focus, such as access to training, education and micro credit schemes to set up small businesses, all of which she said were more important and already being offered by the Barisan Nasional government.

“Of course, women make half of the vote so everyone wants to cater to them but please, women of Malaysia, don’t be short sighted; don’t take that kind of bait.

“Look long term across the horizon and think about your own daughters and their future with what the Barisan Nasional government has put in place. You cannot deny that,” Rafidah said.

Yesterday, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said a PR government would introduce a savings scheme called the Caruman Wanita Nasional for homemakers and a childcare allowance for poor households as part of the opposition pact’s pitch to win the crucial female votes ahead of the general election expected soon.

The PKR president said the proposed savings scheme would be a social safety net for women homemakers, and would cost taxpayers RM3 billion a year.

Under the proposed scheme, a PR government would provide a yearly payment of RM600 to homemakers, while ensuring the husband also contributes a sum ranging from RM120 to RM1,200 per year.

The scheme’s target is to ensure that a homemaker will have at least savings of RM30,000 at age 50.

Wan Azizah said PR expects up to five million homemakers to benefit from such a scheme.

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