

Pakatan will still close Lynas if it wins, says Fuziah
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KUANTAN, March 15 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) will not compromise and will shut down the controversial Lynas rare earth plant in Gebeng, Pahang if it comes into power, said Kuantan MP Fuziah Salleh today to allay fears that it will do otherwise.

This follows media reports quoting Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as saying last week that the Lynas Advanced Materials Plant (LAMP) can continue operating if it is found to be safe.

“Pakatan Rakyat’s manifesto is crystal clear. We shall shut down Lynas once Pakatan Rakyat gets to form the federal government,” Fuziah (picture) said in a statement here.

As one of the earliest opponents of the plant, Fuziah stressed that it must not be allowed to operate neither in Gebeng nor anywhere else in Malaysia.

“Even if there is a one per cent chance that the Lynas plant is proven safe, it still shouldn’t be there in Gebeng,” the PKR vice-president said.

Observers noted Anwar risks being accused of inconsistency in his stance on the plant following a report in Melbourne-based daily The Age last week where he pledged to back Australian miner Lynas if it is proven safe by a new public inquiry.

Anwar was quoted as saying that he would fast-track the inquiry, but until then the Lynas plant would quickly be shut down.

“I am not prepared to risk the safety of people in and around Kuantan,” he told The Age.

The statement appears to conflict with a remark he made during a Himpunan Hijau rally in Kuantan last year. He assured his audience then that Pakatan would dismantle the plant.

Wong Tack, a prominent activist in the anti-Lynas movement, also dismissed this week suggestions that Anwar was being inconsistent with his position on the Lynas plant.

Wong said he agreed with the opposition leader’s opinion that the Australian mining giant, which he described as coming into Malaysia through the “back door”, should be allowed to operate here should it observe the stringent safety requirements.

“If Lynas went out back through the back door and comes back in properly through the front door, complying with our procedures, then we would let you come,” he said.

But Wong suggested that Lynas did not meet with the safety standards set by the Malaysian government and that its operating licence was acquired irregularly.

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