

**Stop being a 'BN apologist', Paul Low told
Malaysian Insider
May 31, 2013**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 31 — Minister Datuk Paul Low was today ticked off for being an “apologist” for the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) and told to provide solutions that ensure greater government transparency for the country’s future.

Days after being named to the Cabinet, the new minister in charge of integrity and corruption continues to draw flak for his defence of the BN government, the latest over the country’s poor scores and low ranking in the 2013 Revenue Governance Index (RGI) published earlier this month by the New York-based Revenue Watch Institute (RWI), a non-profit organisation which monitors policies in resource-rich countries in addressing poverty, corruption and violent conflict.

“We call upon Datuk Paul Low not to become an apologist for the BN administration.

“He should study the RGI report in detail, review all criticisms and propose all necessary transparency reforms needed for the Petronas Development Act to make Malaysia a shining example of good governance in the world,” said the DAP’s Damansara Utama assemblyman Yeo Bee Yin, in a statement.

Low had reportedly said that Malaysia’s weak result was because the disclosures of overseas agreements makes up a “big item” in the index, pointing out state oil firm Petronas must respect the host government’s requests for non-disclosure while carrying out its operation abroad.

Yeo, the DAP’s social media strategist, lashed out at Low, noting the latter’s excuse was contrary to the RGI report that evaluates a country’s quality of governance in resources based on four areas and that Malaysia had scored zero in several checklists, highlighting that most were related to the disclosure of operations and business activities within Malaysia.

Yeo reminded the minister that Petronas was not the only state oil company with operations overseas, listing as an example Brazil’s Petrobras which, she said, has operations in 24 countries, nearly similar to Petronas’ operations in 22 nations.

She pointed too that Brazil was like Malaysia, an emerging market in the world economy but the Latin American country had managed to rank 5th globally.

“We do not expect Datuk Paul Low to be responsible for the past mistakes done by the BN government.

“We do expect him to give solutions for greater transparency for the future,” the Selangor state lawmaker said.

Among Southeast Asia’s main oil and gas producers, Malaysia was ranked 34th in the latest global index that measures the quality of governance in oil, gas and mining sectors of 58 countries, trailing neighbours Indonesia, the Philippines and even poverty-plagued Timor-Leste.

The index grades each country on four areas: institutional and legal setting; reporting practices; safeguards and quality controls; and enabling environment with the latter looking at how the government manages income from the country's natural resources based on state-owned companies, natural resource funds and subnational revenue transfers.

The RGI then splits the ranking into one of four bands — satisfactory, partial, weak or failing.

Malaysia scored 46 composite points out of 100, on par with west African countries such as Gabon, Guinea and Sierra Leone and just ahead of China, which scored 43 points and ranked 36th out of the 58 countries.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/stop-being-a-bn-apologist-paul-low-told/>