

Gerakan Youth Wants Firmer Action Against Elected Reps Who Vacate Seats

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PUTRAJAYA, Feb 10 (Bernama) -- Gerakan Youth today reiterated its stand for firm action to be taken against elected representatives who vacate their seats without valid reasons.

Its leader, Tan Keng Liang, said the resignation of the elected representatives would lead to wastage of public funds as a by-election had to be held.

He proposed that the Election Commission (EC) amend the law to provide for a fine of RM100,000 and RM200,000 for state assemblymen and MPs, respectively, who resigned without valid reasons.

"The party which is represented by the elected representative concerned should also be barred from contesting in elections for five years," he told reporters after handing over a memorandum to the EC, here.

Under existing law, he said, only the individual concerned was barred from contesting for two years.

In 2009, the movement submitted a similar proposal to the EC, but the proposed fine was RM50,000 for state assemblymen and RM100,000 for MPs who manipulated the democratic system for their personal interests.

Tan said the money spent for a by-election, which he claimed amounted to RM2 million, could be used for the people's benefit.

He said that in 2008, Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail vacated her Permatang Pauh seat to enable her husband, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, to contest the seat and become an MP.

The following year, in 2009, then Penang assemblyman Mohammad Fairus Khairuddin, who was also a Penang deputy chief minister, resigned without giving valid reasons and, recently, Kajang assemblyman Lee Chin Cheh did the same thing.

"Within a period of five years, three PKR elected representatives had vacated their seats.

"We can accept it if the reason is death, illness, bankruptcy or because they are not able to discharge their responsibilities," he said.

He said it was time for the EC to make the necessary changes and amendments to the law to uphold the democratic system and stop people from taking advantage of the system.

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