

Even if Anwar wins Kajang state seat, Pakatan may not solve all of Selangor's woes, says Rafizi

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There is no guarantee Pakatan Rakyat (PR) will solve all of Selangor's problems if Datuk Seri Anwar is voted into the state government, PKR strategic director Rafizi Ramli told a forum in Subang Jaya last night.

Rafizi, who is also the Pandan MP, said this to a question by a member of the audience during a forum on the Kajang by-election which was attended by more than 300 people.

The young man, who identified himself as Nik, asked: "What guarantee is there that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim can solve all the issues in Selangor? If he fails, we, the young people, will see it as a tactic (by Pakatan) to lie to the people."

Rafizi insisted that although it cannot guarantee that all the problems – including rising racial and religious tensions over the "Allah" issue – would be resolved, PR pledged to do things better.

"I cannot guarantee. I cannot pretend to know what will be the outcome. I can only guarantee one thing... that we will do things differently. We will do things better. And we will defend the rights of everyone more vigorously.

"But if you are not satisfied, you can vote us out in 4 years' time," he added.

For Rafizi, even if Pakatan cannot guarantee that all problems, including the 'Allah' issue, would be solved, the coalition will strive to do better. – The Malaysian Insider pic Najjua Zulkefli, February 6, 2014. Rafizi was among one of four panellists at last night's forum at the Empire Hotel in Subang Jaya which was attended by non-governmental organisations and members of the public.

The other panellists were former Bersih co-chair Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan, PAS research institute director Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad and DAP publicity director and Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua. The two-hour event was moderated by Seri Setia assemblyman Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad.

The forum was held to allow PR explain the circumstances which led to the shock resignation of Kajang assemblyman Lee Chin Cheh on January 27 and the subsequent announcement of Anwar's candidacy for the state seat.

The "Kajang Move" – as it is now known – was highly criticised by members of the public, including PKR supporters and NGOs, including the Coalition for Fair and Free Elections, Bersih 2.0.

Rafizi had earlier said that Anwar's presence in Selangor was needed to "reinforce the state government" in light of the increasing interfaith friction in the state.

"It will give him political legitimacy to confront Umno-BN politics head-on. We cannot do it in 3 to 4 years' time as it will be too late. We had to intervene now," he added.

He was referring to the Selangor Islamic Religious Department's (Jais) seizure of more than 300 Bahasa Malaysia and Iban bibles from the Bible Society of Malaysia on January 2.

Jaid defended its move by saying that the bibles contained the word "Allah" which is not allowed to be used by non-Muslims, according to a state enactment.

When Catholic priest Father Lawrence Andrew said that Christians would continue to use the word in their church services, police reports were lodged against him by right-wing Malay groups.

Selangor Umno then announced that it had lined up 30 roadshows to "educate" Muslims on the state's controversial legislation governing propagation among Muslims in view of the Allah row.

Rafizi, however, acknowledged the anger and disappointment by the public over the "Kajang Move", noting that PKR frequently made "unpopular decisions".

"It is better for us to remain unpopular if what we do is for the greater good of the state," he said.

The parliamentarian also explained that PKR had gotten the consent of DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang and PAS leaders Datuk Mustafa Ali and Salahuddin Ayob before Anwar was named as Pakatan's candidate for the state seat.

He denied that the reason behind the Kajang Move was because of the internal spat between Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim and Selangor PKR head Azmin Ali.

"The difference of opinion between the two has existed since Day One. If this was because of the power play, we would have waited for the party congress in April and let them have it out there," Rafizi added.

Pua, meanwhile, claimed that Pakatan "would be finished" should Anwar lose the Kajang by-election.

"The Kajang by-election is extremely important for PR. If we lose Kajang, PR is done for. We can forget about 'ubah' or change or even changing the BN government," he said.

For PAS, the 'Kajang Move' is a strategic move, a litmus test in the roadmap to Putrajaya, says Dr Dzulkefly. – The Malaysian Insider by Najjua Zulkefli, February 6, 2014. Dr Dzulkefly, who was questioned about PAS's stand on the "Kajang Move", stressed that the party would stand by the statement of its president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, who has thrown his support behind Anwar.

"We see this as a strategic move. We, in PAS, also see it as a litmus test in the roadmap to Putrajaya," he added. – February 6, 2014.

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