

## **Nothing Wrong for Sabah Chief Minister to Request Aid from The Federal Government**

The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) refers to the speech made by Information chief of Perikatan Nasional, Mohamed Azmin Ali on 20 September 2020, accusing the president of Parti Warisan Sabah, Shafie Apdal as munafik (hypocrite) for requesting aid for Sabah in 2018 when Azmin Ali was the minister for economic affairs under Pakatan Harapan government.

There is nothing wrong for any chief minister or menteri besar of a state to request aid or assistance from the federal government. In fact, it is the responsibility of the federal government to provide aid to any state in Malaysia when necessary as the people of Sabah also pay taxes to the federal government.

To accuse Shafie Apdal of munafik for doing his job as chief minister is therefore uncalled for.

This is especially true with the lopsided income distribution between the federal government and the state governments, which tilted heavily in favour of the federal government, resulting in Sabah, despite being rich in natural resources, is also one of the poorest states in Malaysia.

Azmin Ali should be ashamed of himself for ridiculing a chief minister of a state for requesting aid from the federal government instead of addressing the structural problem of unequal wealth distribution between the federal government and the state governments.

Azmin Ali should also be reminded that the funds held by the federal government are taxpayers' money and does not belong to him or his party. Taxpayers' money to the federal government should not be used to ridicule or threaten political opponents in elections. The federal government is elected to manage public funds on behalf of the people and it should provide aid or assistance to the states in need.

BERSIH 2.0 calls on the federal government to initiate discussions with all state governments to negotiate a new framework of income distribution that will rectify the huge disparity of income distribution between the federal government and state governments in the true spirit of federalism on which this nation is founded upon.

**Released by:**

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