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Prioritise jobs alongside water issue, say Kelantanese

KOTA BARU: Voters in Kelantan want politicians to focus more on creating job opportunities rather than harping on water issues in the state.

Several voters, when spoken to, said they have water wells at home, so water is not an issue.

They even said that they did not mind this, as this meant that they did not need to pay their monthly water bills.

A trader at Pasar Siti Khadijah who only wanted to be known as Illa said she has not experienced water supply problems for years.

She was puzzled when outsiders told her that it was a big problem in Kelantan.

“All of us have wells at home and most of us also have reserve water tanks, which means we have access to water all the time.

“I prefer it to stay this way because getting my own water means I don’t have to pay the monthly water bills,” she said.

A business owner who wanted to be known as Azim said politicians who do not live in Kelantan should do their homework first before raising issues affecting the state.

He said although water issues are often a talking point employed by politicians to get more support, the problem is not as big as it sounds.

“The water here is clean because if it wasn’t, we would have made noise a long time ago.

“Most people here either have a water well or a water tank or both in their homes, which provide water just fine,” he said.

However, he noted that the water from his well and reserved tanks is not always clean. But he said that it was still usable.

Instead of harping on water issues, Azim said: “Candidates should show what kind of initiatives they can bring to Kelantan so that the youths can have more job opportunities, don’t just harp on the water issue”.

As of February 2023, the unemployment rate in Kelantan stood at 4.1%.

It was reported that the Department of Statistics Malaysia’s data showed that the unemployment rate in the state was rather high compared with the country’s overall unemployment rate, which stood at 3.6%.

In May, Kelantan Socso was reported to have said one of the factors causing a high rate of unemployment in Kelantan was because the people in the state were selective about jobs and unwilling to leave the state for jobs.

A 20-year-old business owner named Haikal said he is happy with the way things are in Kelantan, especially in terms of the cost of living.

“You can live here with a job that pays RM2,500 to RM3,000,” he said.

A 40-year-old school teacher in Tumpat said he feels comfortable living in Kelantan because of the state government’s promotion of Islamic values.

To him, preserving Islamic values and traditions is a priority, adding that these would be the main things to consider when he votes on Aug 12.

“Islam comes first because it is my way of life. I will choose the party that can guarantee this,” he said.

Last month, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim announced an additional allocation of RM500mil to the Kelantan government to resolve the water supply issues.

This came after Kelantan Deputy Mentri Besar Datuk Amar Nik Abdullah said that the reason for the water woes was due to insufficient allocations from the Federal Government.