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Zulkifli rapped for suggesting ban on sale of beer and condom

By TUNKU SHAHARIAH and SHAUN HO

GEORGE TOWN: Zulkifli Noordin, known for his firebrand politics, has been lambasted for calling for a ban on sale of beer and condom in convenience stores.

Wanita MCA chief Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun said the Kulim Bandar Baru MP was "over-zealous" in his perception that those who drank liquor and used condoms were up to no good.

"The use of condoms is more for family planning and safe sex – to prevent the spread of diseases like HIV/AIDS," she said.

"As for beer, it's just for socialising and leisure," she said, adding that education was more important than controlling people's behaviour.

"Zulkifli should learn to be more open minded and respect other people's opinions and freedom," said Chew.

"With freedom, I'm not talking about free sex, but safe sex and family planning."

Echoing Chew's point, Malaysian AIDS Council executive director Bakhtiar Talhah said condoms had proven effective in curbing HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

"Convenience is the key in encouraging condom use," he said.

"Any measure to remove them from being easily purchased by the public should be looked at purely from a public health perspective by the relevant authorities."

In the Order Paper, scheduled for the new Parliament meeting today, Zulkifli has submitted a long list of Private Members' Bill in which he urged, among others, a ban on convenience stores such as 7-Eleven from selling condoms and beer, that the Home Ministry conducts an investigation on Sisters in Islam; and that Muslim foreign maids should not be allowed to work for non-Muslim employers.

Kinrara assemblyman Teresa Kok said Zulkifli's stand did not reflect that of Pakatan Rakyat's.

"I suggest he look at the macro and broader picture of politics, rather than always harping on petty, controversial issues that create dis-

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DATIN CHEW MEI FUN



sension and argument within Pakatan," said Kok, who is from DAP.

Her colleague, Tanjung MP Chow Kon Yeow, said there was currently no law that prohibited the sale of condoms and beer.

"As the name implies, convenience stores are for people's convenience," he said.

"It is not confined only to Muslims. "If there is a ban, it would not be fair to the other races who patronise such stores," he said.

Zulkifli's colleague Elizabeth Wong, who is Bukit Lanjan assemblyman, said all motions and Private Members' Bills should be coordinated and discussed among Pakatan first.

"This is so that they are consistent with our party policies and our reform agenda," she said.

Bukit Mertajam MP Chong Eng, whom Zulkifli has openly clashed with during debates in the Dewan Rakyat, said the MP was merely expressing his personal feelings.

"Whatever he is submitting will not be debated at the Dewan, so it is of no consequence," said the DAP MP.

In dismissing Zulkifli's Bill as an "MP's private views and nothing more beyond that", Bukit Gelugor MP Karpal Singh said his call for a ban was subjective and probably "subjected" to a certain rationale.

Bayan Baru MP Datuk Zahrain Hashim said, as the sale of beer and condom was not just confined to convenience stores, singling them

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