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DAP-Parliament

DAP CALLS FOR FORMATION OF 31 SELECT COMMITTEES

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- The 10th Parliament, which sat for the first time today, should form 31 select committees to make its members more effective and relevant to the needs of the people and country, the DAP said today.

DAP Chairman Lim Kit Siang suggested the formation of 27 Specialised Select Committees and four General Select Committees.

Malaysia should emulate other Commonwealth Parliaments which have established a specialised committee for almost every ministry to give greater meaning to the principle of parliamentary control and scrutiny of the Executive, he said in a statement.

"Such a committee system will make a great difference in the effectiveness of each individual MP's work in Parliament, as members would gain real knowledge of certain subjects and become truly effective in those spheres," he said.

Lim, a former Opposition Leader who lost in the recent general election, cited as an example the House of Commons in the United Kingdom which has 34 Select Committees.

He said that last Dec 10 Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad appointed "a very Jurassic Cabinet of 27 ministers, which makes the appointment of Specialised Select Committees even more urgent and imperative."

He said the General Select Committees should be on women agenda, mass media, information technology and anti-corruption.

"The Barisan Nasional government should table annual reports on women agenda, mass media, information technology and corruption to Parliament followed by an annual parliamentary debate on the reports," he said.

Lim also proposed that a member of the opposition be appointed to head the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) as well as to take one of the two posts of Deputy Speaker to make the new Parliament more consultative.

More than half of the membership of the PAC should come from the opposition, and to heighten Parliamentary scrutiny of the Executive the daily one-hour question time should be extended to two hours, he said.

"The right of the opposition to initiate parliamentary business must be accorded due recognition, by procedural provisions for instance, that every Thursday afternoon sitting in the four-day Parliamentary week, would be reserved for non-government business," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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