

26/12/1999

`Revert to half-day Parliament sittings'

PETALING JAYA, Sat. - Parliament sittings should be reverted to half-day sessions to ensure quality debates, DAP secretary-general Kerk Kim Hock said.

He said the present sitting, from 10am to 5.30pm, was not practical as most MPs have official duties, party responsibilities and constituency problems to attend to.

"The present system of whole-day meetings will not help in ensuring quality debates," said the Kota Melaka MP yesterday.

Kerk said that with the previous system, MPs, including Ministers, could schedule their other work in the morning and attend Parliament sittings in the afternoon.

Parliament sittings used to start at 2.30pm from Monday to Thursday.

Kerk also welcomed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's directive to Barisan Nasional MPs to attend Parliament regularly and take part in debates.

He called on Dr Mahathir and Cabinet members to lead by example and attend Parliament regularly.

"The extremely low rate of attendance of most Ministers in the past should not recur."

He said BN MPs should actively participate in debates with the opposition in Parliament and all MPs should be given sufficient debate time.

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