

PM given a to-do list in Parliament
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Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang has spelt out a list of tasks which Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi must do in the coming session of Parliament if he is to deliver on his reform pledge.

Firstly, he said that Pak Lah must announce a royal commission of inquiry into the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) and explain why corruption had worsened in the past three years instead of improving as reflected in recent surveys.

"The Royal Address (which is not the personal speech of the king but the policy presentation of the government-of-the-day for the next 12 months) on Monday should also incorporate the Abdullah administration's commitment to introduce legislation to confer full autonomy to the ACA, removing it from the jurisdiction of the PM's Department and making it fully independent and answerable only to Parliament," Lim said in a statement today.

Secondly, he stressed that the PM must announce that a bill to establish the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) will be taken through all three readings in the forthcoming meeting of Parliament.

"This is in view of the worsening crime index as well as the repeated blows to public confidence in the ability of the police to implement the 125 recommendations of the Royal Police Commission to become an efficient, incorruptible, professional world-class police service to combat crime, uphold law and order and respect human rights."

Firm commitment

The opposition leader also said that the public reprimand of Deputy Internal Security Minister Mohd Johari Baharum by Abdullah - who is his immediate boss as the Internal Security Minister - has come as another blow to public confidence.

Abdullah has been quoted by newspapers as telling Johari to answer the allegations of corruption "one by one".

"No need to accuse other people. Just answer all the questions," he said.

Johari has alleged to have received more than RM5 million to release three underworld suspects who were held under the Emergency Ordinance, which allows detention without trial.

In defending himself, Johari blamed the police of sloppy investigation, which forced him to sign the release orders.

Thirdly, Lim said in keeping with Pak Lah's pledge to lead an open, accountable and transparent government, the Royal Address on Monday should contain the government's commitment to introduce a Freedom of Information Act to replace the Official Secrets Act (OSA).

"There should also be a firm commitment to remove from the OSA all privatisation contracts, whether toll and water concessions, to put them in the public domain for the scrutiny of Malaysians," he added.

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