

Senator: Include PPPA, FOI in 100-day reform plan
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A senior Pakatan Rakyat leader today questioned why the abolition of several restrictive laws is not included in the opposition coalition's much-anticipated 100-day reformasi programme.

NONESenator S Ramakrishnan (left) said the removal of laws such as the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA) and the Official Secrets Act (OSA) has always been part of the opposition's struggle.

He was clearly a little surprised it was not included in the plan announced during Pakatan's second convention yesterday.

"I don't know why it was not included. It should ... and I would like for Pakatan to include that (in the plan) and introduce the Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill," he said when met in the senate lobby today.

Pakatan yesterday unveiled its 100-day programme amidst the pomp and ceremony of its second convention in Penang, aimed at giving the rakyat a taste of "real reformasi" that would be possible under their rule.

Ramakrishnan, who is also a Selangor DAP committee member, said he is all for the implementation of FOI law and for the PPPA and OSA, among others, to be repealed, but acknowledged that there may be a lack of consensus between the three Pakatan partners - PKR, DAP and PAS.

He added that plans to implement the proposed local council elections have been similarly held back by a lack of consensus, particularly on the potential make-up of local councillors in urban areas.

"I am also all for local council elections, but there is no consensus, especially with PAS. It's too soon (to come to a decision) and we need more open discussions.

"I think PAS has certain reservations (over local council elections) because in urban areas there are more non-Malays, and maybe they feel they may not have enough representation.

"But we will be going in as a team, so that issue actually does not arise... I think we need to discuss more and assure PAS that there would be sufficient representation (for all)."

PPPA, local council polls on the backburner

DAP vice-president Tunku Abdul Aziz Ibrahim meanwhile said that though the PPPA and local council elections were not included in the 100-day plan, it does not mean that Pakatan have abandoned their election promises.

He said while these issues are important, the opposition also needs to be practical and tackle more immediate concerns while constantly keep the many issues "in people's thoughts" as they continue the fight to take over the country.

judiciary crisis forum 290907 tunku abdul aziz“I suppose you could say that (some issues are on the backburner). We need to develop a priority list and focus on what's urgent. (The PPPA) is certainly an issue we are all concerned about, (but) you can't have an open-ended shopping list,” he said.

Tunku Abdul Aziz (right) wagged his finger at the mainstream media for constantly playing up Pakatan's alleged inability to deliver on its election promises, stressing that the opposition's promises were made on the premise of their coming to power.

“This is not fair because we are not in a position to do anything except keep issues alive. The reality is that we do not have the power to implement change... it is not a matter of not doing, but not being able to do anything,” he said.

Tunku Abdul Aziz said however that it does not make the responsibility any lighter for the opposition, who need to keep at being advocates and press for implementation of reform across the country until the day that Pakatan takes power.

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