

**Ambiga: Even Burma allows street demos**  
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**by Lee Way Loon**

Bersih 2.0 chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan said the proposed Peaceful Assembly Bill 2011 was even more repressive than a similar law passed recently in Burma's military-dominated Parliament.

"It is shameful that Burma can propose a far more democratic law than us.

"It is a terrible insult to Malaysians because we were promised more democracy, but now it is the opposite," said Ambiga, who is a former Bar Council president.

At a press conference in Petaling Jaya, Ambiga said Burma's new law allows street demonstrations and organisers only need to notify the authorities five days in advance.

She said this was in stark contrast to Malaysia's Peaceful Assembly Bill 2011, which proposes banning street demonstrations and imposing a 30-day notice period.

Putting the numbers together, Bersih secretariat member Wong Chin Huat said Burma was six times more democratic than Malaysia.

Hefty fines targets the poor

Burma has been under authoritarian military rule since 1962 and has an appalling human rights track record.

Commenting on the stiff fines - between RM10,000 and RM20,000 - proposed in the Bill, Wong said that this was an attempt to stop the poor from joining any protests.

"This is to tell the poor please look at your mortgage first before going to rally."

The Peaceful Assembly Bill 2011 has been widely criticised by human rights groups, including the government funded Human Rights Commission (Suhakam), and Pakatan Rakyat leaders.

It was argued that the Bill seeks to provide the police and the home minister with more powers and banning street demonstrations altogether.

The first round on Dewan Rakyat debates on the Bill will kick off on Tuesday.

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