

**Pakatan boycotts PSC on Lynas**  
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**By S Pathmawathy**

The opposition walked out of the Dewan Rakyat in a huff this afternoon, after the debate to set up the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on the Lynas Advanced Materials Plant.

The move to set up the PSC, they argued, is an attempt to whitewash the dangers from the rare earths refinery in Gebeng, Kuantan.

The Pakatan Rakyat coalition has also decided to boycott the parliamentary panel, declaring it to be powerless in stopping the rare earths refinery from operating, even if it is found to be unsafe.

“We wish we could (take part in the PSC), but there is no point...

NONE“Even if the PSC declares the plant to be dangerous, the BN administration will manipulate the situation,” Fuziah Salleh (PKR-Kuantan) (left) told reporters at the Parliament lobby.

Flanked by representative from DAP, PKR and PAS, Fuziah also announced that they will not partake in the process which they regard a gimmick.

The motion, tabled by Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz this morning, was passed after intense debates which saw both side of the House taking potshot at each other.

Opposition parliamentarians demanded to know the purpose of mooted the select committee when Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had said the outcome will not influence the government’s decision on the rare earths refinery.

“Revoke Lynas’ temporary operating licence, stop work, stop operations and give us the guarantee that the discussions and explanations will be done openly, and then we will be involved,” said Shah Alam PAS MP Khalid Samad while Nazri was winding up the debate.

“The purpose is to whitewash, to help BN rectify the mistakes they made - where they let the plant to be built, approved the licence to operate - only then they wanted to form the PSC... the minister’s explanation far from satisfactory,” he lashed out.

azlanNajib had said the main reason behind the PSC is to allay public fears on the safety of the rare earth refinery scheduled to begin operations by the end of the third quarter this year, as well as on the health risks of the project.

Nazri, however, countered that Najib’s statement was only to show that the PSC is neutral and independent.

“I have said before, the prime minister answered the question brought to him - will the government abide by the PSC’s decision - the PSC must be seen neutral... it doesn’t mean we will nor abide by it,” said the minister.

“It comes back to the issue of neutrality. That’s why the prime minister said we won’t be bound. If he had said yes, then there would be no need for the PSC and we would just decide if we should carry on (with the project) or not.

“Where does it say in the proposal I’ve tabled? Does it say the PSC is intended to refute the twisted facts that have been presented?” he asked.

Nazri then wrapped up the argument, stressing that parliamentary committee is not being set up to dispel preconceived notions that the plant is unsafe, before deputy speaker Ronald Kiandee called for voting.

'A gimmick and a tool for public relations'

"We wanted to give it (the PSC) a chance. Until the last minute we were appealing. But the minister won't even listen to me, he didn't even give me a chance to speak," said Fuziah at a press conference.

"As the MP of Kuantan, it is my wish that the PSC is fair, a platform to hear the grouses of the people and a channel for the people to express their anguish and concerns," she added.

However, she said her hopes were dashed after listening to the government's take on the committee, saying that it is just a "gimmick and a tool for public relations".

"BN is determined to push it through. I don't know why. It does not make sense when everyone is against it, but the BN administration is determined," said Fuziah.

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