

Changes to Johor standing orders 'autocratic'

MalaysiaKini.com

April 21, 2012

Johor DAP has slammed the Johor speaker and Standing Orders Committee chairperson for holding the committee meeting in Terengganu and for upcoming amendments to the standing orders that it says are "autocratic".

NONThe committee's decision to meet on April 28 at Hotel Grand Continental, Kuala Terengganu during a visit to the Terengganu state assembly is "unacceptable" and against Commonwealth parliamentary conventions, said Johor opposition leader Boo Cheng Hau.

Boo (left), in a statement today, said all meetings by state committees ought to be held in within the state.

"Their action ... is akin to Parliament or any of its committees having their meetings abroad."

The Johor DAP chief also criticised the amendments to the standing orders that are to be raised at the meeting curbs the access that MPs and the public have to information about the state administration.

The amendments, said Boo, are undemocratic and show that the BN government is "increasingly autocratic and indifferent to the grievances of the people".

Among the offensive amendments Boo was unhappy with are:

1. A reduction in the number of an assemblyperson's written questions at a state assembly from the present 11,
2. Any written questions that are not answered during the assembly will be scrapped and will not be answered in writing,
3. Limiting the number of reps giving speeches during the sitting from five to three, and limiting the speeches to the opening ceremony and budget presentation,
4. Broadening the speaker's powers to reject questions that he/she feels is inappropriate or irrelevant.

Boo said the amendments were aimed at hiding the weaknesses of the state exco in carrying out their duties, and in silencing the state reps in the assembly.

"Even though the Internal Security Act is being abolished, the Johor state administration is taking steps to tighten its grip on the freedom of state reps' voice in the state assembly," he said.

"Pakatan Rakyat Johor opposes any amendments to the standing orders that are autocratic in nature and which threatens the democracy of the state," he added.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd

Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/195609>

