

**Stop the seditious speeches now, PKR warns BN  
Local polls: BN not keen on law, but will contest ...**

**By Susan Loone  
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The Enactment for Local Elections in Penang Island and Province Wellesley 2012 was tabled for the second reading in the state legislative assembly today, by exco Chow Kon Yeow.

None of the BN representatives were in the House, having staged a walkout yesterday to protest speaker Abdul Halim Hussain's rejection of a motion to sanction Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng for a purported remark linked to 'demolition' of Hindu temples.

On Sunday, Chow had urged the BN assemblypersons to "vote with conscience" for the proposed law instead of adhering to the party whip's directive.

State BN chief Teng Chang Yeow (*left*) had told *Malaysiakini* on Monday that federal government laws do not provide for local elections and the state should comply with this.

He said the BN has not come to the stage of agreeing to the proposal, and that the Bill should first be discussed thoroughly at the national local government council.

"We need to achieve that kind of understanding. We cannot just have Penang conducting local polls. It has to be done in the whole country, implemented in other states as well," said Teng, who is Gerakan secretary-general.

Chow (*left*) has repeatedly said that the state had contacted the national local government council, with no response to date.

Teng also said that, if the Bill is passed and enforced, BN will take part in local elections.

"Who knows, we may control the local councils. Do you want a situation where the state cannot work with the city councils? Who will suffer?" he asked.

He said the issue would be an campaign topic for both coalitions in the upcoming general election.

In 2008, Pakatan Rakyat had made an election pledge to revive local government polls if elected to power.

Two years later, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had said local council polls are "unnecessary".

**'BN will respect laws but ...'**

Asked if BN would revoke the law should it regain power in Penang, Teng said this may not happen "unless and until we feel it is archaic".

"This is a democracy where we respect the authority of the state legislature, the highest law-

making body in the state," said the former Padang Kota representative.

"We cannot bend it and say we oppose it. We may oppose it in the process of decision making, but we lost and must now accept the process of law."

Teng said that, if a law and its implementation is good, there should be no reason to change it. However, the federal-state relationship needs to be considered in passing and implementing every law.

The Bill on local government elections, if passed today, would add to the already fiery political situation in the country, he claimed.

"We need to manage the federal-state relationship well. We rely a lot on the federal government.

"Why antagonise the federal authority? Like it or not, we are federalist. We should not have laws which are different from the federal constitution," he added.

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