

DAP: Johor heading for absolute monarchy?
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A new Johor Bill to widen the sultan's jurisdiction over land matters has drawn growing objection, with another opposition assemblyperson now sounding alarm that the state was heading towards an absolute monarchy.

DAP's Selangor rep Lau Weng San warned in that if the Johor Housing and Real Property Board Bill 2014 becomes law, this may change the whole basis of Malaysia's form of government.

"Does the country have a system of constitutional monarchy or absolute monarchy?" the Kampung Tungku assemblyperson asked in a statement today.

"Although the executive, judiciary and legislature are separate from one another under the doctrine of separation of powers and the sultan holds influence over all three, they have never performed the function of this power.

"Instead, the sultan only appoints the qualified and chosen people to fill positions in all three institutions."

Lau argued that the new Bill was, therefore, tipping the balance of power.

Under the Bill, the Johor sultan will be tasked to appoint members of the housing board, fix the remuneration and allowances of the board and oversee its accounts.

He also has the power to dissolve the board.

'Behind the times'

"An absolute monarchy is not hard to understand. The king holds and implements all power, just like in the ancient times.

"For me, the suitability of the absolute monarchy system does not keep abreast with the times.

"The proposal to authorise the sultan to be involved in government business will definitely affect the framework of the basic structure of the constitution and will change all the features of a constitutional monarchy that has been practised since Independence."

Lau said that this is why he urges the Johor government to proceed very cautiously with the new Bill to be tabled on Monday at the state assembly sitting.

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