

Zahid, Nancy zip lips on NSC Bill
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Government ministers, including Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, are keeping mum on the National Security Council (NSC) Bill, which was gazetted without royal assent.

Zahid refused to answer when asked when the NSC Bill would be enforced.

"Let's focus on the Sungai Besar election first," he said with an awkward smile.

Likewise, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (in charge of law) Nancy Shukri and Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister Ahmad Maslan also declined to comment.

On Feb 17, the Conference of Rulers asked that the NSC Bill, which would give the National Security Council headed by the prime minister emergency-like powers, be refined.

However, according to the national gazette, the NSC Bill was automatically assented the following day, on Feb 18, under Article 66(4A) of the Federal Constitution.

The provision grants automatic assent to any legislation if the Yang di-Pertuan Agong does not provide his assent within 30 days from when a legislation is presented to him.

The bill was gazetted into law on Tuesday, although an enforcement date has yet to be set.

Nancy, when met after visiting Kuala Kangsar BN candidate Mastura Mohd Yazid, said the bill was not under her jurisdiction.

"It's not mine, it's Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Shahidan Kassim's," she said.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Maslan, who is also Umno cyber warfare chief, refused to entertain *Malaysiakini's* question on this matter.

"Tak apa lah (never mind) I don't want to answer. Next question," he said after asking the *Malaysiakini* reporter to identify which agency she was with.

Critics have said that the emergency-like powers bestowed by the NSC Bill would usurp the Agong's authority to declare emergencies.

They have also voiced concerns that it may be used to crack down on dissent.

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