

MPs want Burma suspended from Asean
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A petition was launched today in Parliament to suspend Burma from Asean for flouting basic democratic norms.

NONEThe Malaysian chapter of the Asean Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus' (AIPMC) petition also urges the Malaysian government not to recognise the military junta's upcoming general election.

"Our country (Burma) is facing a challenging time, as the military junta is trying to hold an election which will further entrench its rule," said Burmese activist Khin Ohmar (below).

NONEThe petition also urges the Malaysian government to continue its support for Burma's National League of Democracy party led by Aung San Suu Kyi.

It calls for support in the forming of an inquiry into war crimes committed by the military junta, and to protect Burmese refugees and migrant workers in Malaysia.

Speaking to reporters at the Parliament lobby today, Ohmar added that supporting the petition is in Malaysia's interest, as the junta' continued rule will only drive more of its people into exile.

"This will mean more refugees, more migrant workers and more drug trafficking as Burma citizens are forced to leave the country," said Ohmar, who is also foreign affairs member of the Burma Democracy and Ethnic Rights Movement.

Malaysia's responsibility

AIPMC deputy chairman and Balik Pulau parliamentarian Yusmadi Yusoff added that Malaysia has added responsibility to pursue the cause, as it is now a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

"I challenge the current leadership to raise the issue (of Burma) in Geneva, otherwise it would be another missed opportunity, just as we did not raise the Palestine issue when meeting with US President Barack Obama," he said.

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