

Suaram: Selangor sunshine law a big step forward
Malaysiakini.com
July 07, 2010

Human rights watchdog Suaram has applauded the Selangor government's announcement that it will table the Freedom of Information (FOI) Enactment during the upcoming state legislative assembly sitting.

freedom of information "Suaram believes that the FOI Enactment is a big step forward in the country's democratisation process," said Suaram coordinator Tah Moon Hui in a statement today.

He said that the move will allow the public access to government documents that are of public interest which were previously deemed classified under the Official Secrets Act 1972 (OSA).

Citing examples of why the FOI law was necessary, Tah said many high-profile scandals were shielded from public scrutiny by the OSA such as the contentious procurement of two Scorpene submarines and the Port Klang Free Zone debacle.

Tah also lauded the state government's pledge to seek public feedback on the FOI legislation and he hoped that the process would be both comprehensive and inclusive.

'Others should follow suit'

He said that Suaram and other civil society organisations were willing to extend their expertise and cooperation to the state government in formulating the law.

suaram suhakam memo police abuse power 190607 tah moon hui "Finally, Suaram strongly calls on the federal government and all state governments to follow the Selangor government's initiative by enacting FOI legislation under their respective administrations.

"The federal government should also stop enforcing the OSA and repeal the law," added Tah (right).

Selangor is the first state to take steps towards formulating a freedom of information law which was part of the opposition coalition's election pledges for the March 2008 general election.

Next week, the state government is expected to table the Bill during the state legislative assembly sitting for the first reading.