

S'gor in 'right direction' on bipartisan initiative
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The Selangor government has won plaudits for its move to appoint BN's Sungai Burong representative Mohd Shamsudin Lias as head of the state Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

ramon navaratnam interview 071108 04Said former Transparency International-Malaysia president Ramon Navaratnam: "If it happens, public confidence and the integrity of the PAC will be enhanced because there will be less scope for dishonesty and malpractice."

He emphasised the fact that such a practice is not unusual in most mature democracies and said he is pleased because the move shows that the state is heading in the right direction.

Ramon (left), now chairperson of the Centre for Public Policy Studies, suggested that the Selangor PAC should set up a special public inquiry to look into allegations of illegal sand-mining.

"If the Selangor government puts an opposition member in charge, it would show they have nothing to hide," he noted.

Ramon cautioned that the person who heads the PAC should be thoroughly screened to ensure that he or she is a person of the highest credibility.

"The Selangor government must ensure that Mohd Shamsudin has what it takes to be PAC chairperson ...does he have the appropriate credentials and credibility?" he asked.

He also hoped that Selangor's "good principle" will push the federal government to follow suit.

"The BN government should take a leaf out of Selangor's book because the electorate will be watching its response," he said.

No decision yet

Selangor had, on Monday, filed a motion in the state assembly to appoint Mohd Shamsudin to replace PKR's Kajang representative Lee Kim Sin.

NONESpeaker Teng Chang Khim has said that Mohd Shamsudin is a "suitable candidate", being a two-term assemblyperson and a former district officer.

Approached outside the House earlier this week, Mohd Shamsudin (left) had declined to comment on his possible appointment beyond saying he would "cross that bridge when the time comes".

The move to place opposition members at the head of a PAC is common in Commonwealth countries that follow the Westminster parliamentary system, but is unprecedented in Malaysia.

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