

**Pakatan: BN rushed bill to avoid scrutiny**  
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Perak Pakatan Rakyat has decried the short time allocated for debates on the RM80 million supplementary budget bill at the state legislative assembly that was limited to just one day.

Speaker R Ganesan had limited the lead speakers from both the government and opposition bench to 15 minutes each, while subsequent speakers were given 10 minutes to debate.

NONEOusted state assembly speaker V Sivakumar (seated right in picture) said that Parliamentary convention dictates that bills of such nature and importance would require days of debates.

"Even in school debates, debaters are given more than a mere 10 minutes," said Sivakumar during a press conference after Pakatan staged a walkout.

During the debates, Opposition Leader Nizar Jamaluddin refused to stop his debate speech after his 15 minutes were up and continued speaking even after his microphone was switched off.

This earned him a suspension from the House by speaker R Ganesan, but Nizar only left after 30 minutes of arguments, prompting the Pakatan walkout.

"I was fighting for the rights of the rakyat," said Nizar, adding that in the past, then-opposition leader Ngeh Khoo Ham was allowed to speak for two-and-a-half hours during similar debates.

Zambry: Its just a supplementary bill

Nizar, who was ousted as Perak Menteri Besar by BN in February 2009, said BN was bent on approving the extra allocations without any proper debates.

NONE"We did not want to fight. We were prepared to debate and ask questions, but there was not enough time given... they are murdering democracy," he said.

Meanwhile, Nizar also criticised the state government for only allowing Umno-linked TV3 and federal government-owned Bernama to have unrestricted access in the chambers.

Other news organisations were huddled into a separate room, in which video and audio feeds were intermittently disrupted.

Previously, journalists would be allowed to sit in the public gallery, where the proceedings could be followed "live", such as in Parliament and most state legislative assemblies throughout the country.

At a press conference later, Perak Menteri Besar Zambry Abdul Kadir said only one day was allocated for the debates because the subject was "only a supplementary bill".

"It is only a supplementary bill. What is there to debate for so long?" he asked.

'No one told me to boot Nizar'

He also denied Pakatan's allegations that he was trying to push the bill through to avoid opposition scrutiny.

"We are not rushing the bill," said Zambry without elaborating.

NONEAt a separate press conference, Ganesan (left) denied claims that he was restricting the media's ability to cover the proceedings.

"I allowed the media inside last time, but they were conducting interviews inside the Dewan while the proceedings were going on."

However, he gave an assurance that the press were given a comfortable working conditions and all the other amenities to ensure they could perform their duties.

Ganesan also refuted claims by Sivakumar that he is a puppet and was prompted with a piece of paper sent to him to deliver the order to eject Nizar.

"I am a lawyer, I know the standing orders. I know what my powers are... I deny it, no one told me to eject Nizar," stressed the speaker.

However, he neither confirmed nor denied that he indeed received a piece of paper and did not divulge what was written on it.

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