

Kelantan to table FOI bill in June
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Opposition party PAS is looking over a draft Freedom of Information (FOI) bill with a view to tabling it at the June sitting of the Kelantan legislative assembly.

Vice-president Husam Musa, when contacted, said the party's legal advisor is looking over the document prepared by the National Coalition for a Freedom of Information Act, a grouping of 34 non-governmental organisations.

The party will then propose its adoption by the PAS-led government under Mentri Besar Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat.

The document, unveiled last month, received input from international groups Article 19 and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative to ensure that the contents meet international standards.

Three coalition members - Sonia Randhawa, Hwa Yi Xing and Clarissa Lee - were in Kelantan from Feb 15-17 to meet with legislators and interested parties in Kota Bahru, Kuala Krai, Tanah Merah and Jelawat.

They distributed leaflets and held discussions to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of information.

"Most of the legislators explicitly said that they supported freedom of information," Randhawa said in a statement today, adding that the meetings also lend support to the campaign for adoption of FOI legislation.

FOI law is based on 10 generic principles - maximum disclosure, routine publication, independent administrative oversight, open government, exceptions, a simple and affordable system, open meetings, review of all laws, protection of whistleblowers and regular review of the Act.

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