

Fong's proposal to suspend NS shot down
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Wong Yeen Fern

The Parliamentary Select Committee on Unity and National Service has rejected a proposal from committee member Fong Po Kuan to suspend the National Service (NS) training programme.

Fong who is also Batu Gajah MP proposed to the committee at its meeting yesterday that NS be suspended but it was turned down by his colleagues for 'reasons' which Fong said she was not at liberty to divulge.

In her proposal, she submitted that NS council chairperson Lee Lam Thye had stated that the council would gather feedback from the public to improve the health, safety and welfare of trainees.

"As the council is now in the process of getting feedback from the public in order to improve NS, it is therefore essential to suspend the training for now in order to allow an improved version to be worked out," Fong explained to malaysiakini when contacted.

She also said that realising the urgency, the NS technical committee was requested to come out with their proposal within two weeks after studying public feedback.

March 20 meeting

Fong highlighted that based on the recent deaths that occurred in camps and the failure of some camps to fulfill the basic necessities of trainees, it is vital to suspend the programme for now.

"By implementing the improved version of national service programme, it will help to regain the confidence of the public towards the programme," she noted.

Meanwhile, Fong revealed that the committee has agreed to her written suggestion that Lee be summoned before the committee.

The committee also wanted all members of the NS council, including the chairperson, to appear before them at its meeting on March 20 in Parliament.

The next NS intake in March 17 and 18 will recruit a number of 35,046 trainees.

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