

**Reveal revised IPCMC bill, Pak Lah told
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has been urged to disclose the revised bill on the formation of the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC).

The call was made by 24 non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In a joint statement over the weekend, they urged the premier and attorney-general (AG) Abdul Gani Patail to make the bill available for public viewing.

On Feb 16, Deputy Internal Security Minister Mohd Johari Baharum said the AG's Chambers was finalising a report containing feedback from various parties including the public and NGOs.

However, the NGOs disputed that consultations had transpired between NGOs and the AG's Chambers.

They said the public was not given any information as to what the bill looked like and how it differed from what was proposed by the Royal Police Commission in its 2005 report.

"Most of all, it was totally absurd for the deputy minister to claim that consultations had taken place when the draft bill was not even made available.

"How can any consultation be meaningful in the absence of the draft bill when it was supposed to be the basis for consultation in the first place?" read the statement.

Long delay

The NGOs also expressed disappointment over the protracted delay in forming the independent police watchdog.

According to them, this had led to the loss of more lives in police custody and human rights violations by the police.

They also asked the AG to consider having an open discussion with NGOs and the public to gain useful input.

The statement also highlighted several alleged human rights violations by the police force since the beginning of this year.

Among them, is the case of 19-year-old factory worker M Vijaya Varman who was allegedly arrested without a proper warrant and assaulted by several policemen in a moving van.

Also cited was the case of a peaceful demonstration against the toll hike which was 'brutally dispersed' by the police.

The action resulted in mass arrests of protesters and many reported to be beaten and having sustained serious injuries.

Among the NGOs that endorsed the joint statement are grassroots movement Jerit, human rights group Suaram, Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM), Sisters in Islam (SIS), Women's Aid Organisation (WAO), Labor Resource Center (LRC), DAP and Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR).

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