

**Kit Siang to push again for parliamentary reforms**  
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Opposition leader and DAP Ipoh Timor MP Lim Kit Siang has revived calls for a series of wide-ranging parliamentary reforms ahead of the new Parliament session expected to convene in May. MCPX

lim kit siang dap pc 130208 seriousOut of his 12 proposals to create a 'first-world Parliament', seven were the same which he had made after the 2004 general election. The 2004 polls marked his comeback to Parliament after a five-year hiatus.

"The political tsunami of the March 8 general election is an unmistakable mandate and demand for far-reaching changes in Malaysia after 50 years of nation-building, including the creation of a vibrant, vigorous and truly representative first-world Parliament," he said in a statement today.

Topping the list are the previous calls for:

- Live telecast of parliamentary proceedings
- Daily two-hour question time
- Opposition MP heading the Public Accounts Committee (tasked to ensure government's money is well-spent)
- Some 30 specialist parliamentary select committees with a select committee for every ministry
- About 10 general parliamentary select committees to produce annual reports on progress, trends and recommendations on national integrity, IT, women's agenda, environment, mass media, corruption etc.
- Allocation of certain days a week specifically to deal with opposition business.
- Research and constituency staffing for MPs.

While the newly-included proposals are:

- prime minister's question time twice a week
- An opposition deputy speaker
- Modernisation and democratisation of standing orders
- Code of ethics for all MPs
- Ministers' parliamentary code of conduct

**Slow pace of reforms**

Among Lim's suggestions, the daily question time was extended by 30 minutes to one-and-a-half hours during the last Parliament sitting while several select committees have been set up.

The select committees include one to review the controversial amendments to the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, on national integrity, national unity and national service.

Lim, who has been the Parliamentary Opposition Leader since 1973 except for the term of 1999-2004, retained his Ipoh Timor parliamentary seat in the last election with a thumping 21,942-majority votes after defeating BN-MCA's Liew Mun Hon.

However, with the March 8 election results, Lim and two other main opposition party leaders have decided to support PKR president and Permatang Pauh MP Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as the new Parliamentary Opposition Leader.

In the just-concluded general election, PKR won 31 parliamentary seats, while DAP holds 28 and PAS 23.

According to tradition, the leader is selected from the opposition party with the most number of seats but based on consensus among all the parties involved.

Wan Azizah is expected to hold the post until her husband and PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's ban from active politics is lifted mid-April and re-elected to Parliament.

"DAP MPs and I will give full support to Wan Azizah and the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Nazri Abdul Aziz who is now fully responsible for parliamentary affairs, to turn the Malaysian Parliament into a first-world Parliament - as it is better to be late than never," said Lim.

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