

**Kit Siang: Najib's failure to support CHOGM view on human rights is 'shocking'**  
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**By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak's failure to back a Commonwealth review on human rights has cast serious doubts to his reform pledges in Malaysia, the DAP's Lim Kit Siang said today.

The prime minister is currently in Perth attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) where one of the key issues discussed was the appointment of a Commissioner for Democracy, the Rule of Law and Human Rights.

The idea was mooted by the Eminent Person's Group (EPG) following criticism that the Commonwealth leaders meeting failed to uphold the principles of democracy and human rights.

Lim attacked Malaysia's prime minister in a strongly-worded statement today, saying he found it "shocking" and "deplorable" that Najib did not support the EPG's recommendations.

He added that Najib's (picture) actions have cast "a very dark shadow" over his reform promises to Malaysians, which included the repeal of the outdated Internal Security Act (ISA) and other security and laws that provide for one man to arbitrarily order a person detained under the flimsiest excuses.

"When the Prime Minister of Malaysia is not prepared to give full-hearted support to the EPG Report which is chaired by his predecessor the previous prime minister, how could one fault the other Commonwealth Heads of Government who opposes the EPG and its reform recommendations?" the DAP parliamentary leader asked.

The EPG is chaired by former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who was reported as saying today that there is an "urgent need" for bold initiatives to reform the Commonwealth and warned that the bloc will go down in history as a "failure" if the EPG's proposals were not followed through.

Malaysia is among a number of Commonwealth countries who are opposed to the appointment of a Commissioner for human rights.

"It is a bit contentious at this stage and there are a lot of divergent views about the appointment," Najib was quoted by The Star as saying today.

Other countries which were opposed to the idea included India, which felt that the bloc should merely focus on development challenges instead of human rights issues.

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