

PR not consulted over electoral review committee, says Kit Siang
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 16 — Lim Kit Siang has expressed his surprise that Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced yesterday that a parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reform will sit tomorrow as Parliament is not in session.

The DAP parliamentary leader (picture) said in a statement today that despite the prime minister stating it would be a bipartisan committee, Pakatan Rakyat (PR) has not been consulted on the matter.

“The first shocker is that it will be having its first meeting tomorrow to discuss “everything that needs to be done” and reach a consensus on the matter.

“How can this be when the Parliamentary Select Committee has not yet been formed and the respective Pakatan Rakyat parties have not been consulted and their agreement sought with regard to the PSC’s terms of reference and its membership?” he said.

After tens of thousands poured into the capital for the July 9 Bersih rally for electoral reform, Najib’s announcement yesterday was a major concession following a month of damage control in which his administration has come under fire on both the domestic and international fronts.

Lim said today that Najib’s establishment of the PSC without consulting PR was a “unilateral and arbitrary” act by BN.

The Ipoh Timur MP said the PM should give a firm undertaking that the Election Commission and relevant departments would not “sabotage requests for information” by using excuses such as they fall under the purview of “official secrets” or “national security.”

He claimed that this was the case with a previous PSC on integrity when Tun Abdullah Badawi was prime minister, which led to the resignation of a Cabinet minister, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, as the committee’s chairman in 2008.

Lim said Bernard had done so after he “met with hostile reception from government departments when they were asked for sensitive information.”

He added that “Najib must also give the categorical assurance that the electoral reforms proposed by the Parliamentary Select Committee would be implemented in time for the next general elections.”

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