

**Hishammuddin: Walkout shows Pakatan disrespecting democracy**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 29 — Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein accused Pakatan Rakyat (PR) lawmakers of disrespecting democracy today when they staged a walkout from Parliament during the debate on the Peaceful Assembly Bill.

Hishammuddin hit out at Pakatan MPs for their walkout. — File pic  
“If they want to talk about democracy and the system that we have, by walking out they are not respecting the democracy that they are supposed to be campaigning and fighting for,” he told a press conference at the Umno general assembly here.

The Dewan Rakyat passed the controversial Peaceful Assembly Bill earlier today with just votes from Barisan Nasional (BN) lawmakers after PR MPs staged a walkout from the chambers.

The Bill was swiftly passed with the six amendments revolving around the advance notice required for an assembly.

Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia had allowed just three opposition MPs to debate the Bill, all of whom asked for it to be withdrawn and put before a select committee.

“This is our way of rejecting the Bill until we have a select committee,” PKR’s Subang MP R. Sivarasa told The Malaysian Insider as the opposition lawmakers left Parliament.

“This Bill does not protect national security, only the security of BN leaders,” said PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, who was the last PR MP allowed to speak.

Critics have said the proposed law, which bars street protests, is more repressive than those in countries like Myanmar, which has one of the world’s poorest human rights records.

Myanmar’s military-dominated Parliament passed a law last week allowing street protests and a notice period of just five days, fewer than the 10 days required by the Peaceful Assembly Bill.

Umno information chief Datuk Ahmad Maslan called opposition MPs “cowards” for staging a walkout.

“I am perplexed by their behaviour... if they want to make their views heard, debate.

“Umno MPs even left the president’s briefing to attend Parliament to vote,” he said.

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