

BN not 'bulldozing' laws, says deputy minister
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, April 19 — The government has insisted that there is sufficient time to complete debates and push through eight new laws in the Dewan Rakyat by tonight despite complains from the opposition about the rush to do so in just one day.

Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk V.K. Liew dismissed complaints raised by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) representatives, denying that the ruling government was attempting to "bulldoze" the legislative amendments.

"No such thing as bulldozed... all the MPs have been given notice on the Bills... so how can they be bulldozed?" he asked, when approached at Parliament lobby this morning.

"It (the Bills) has been stated in the Order Paper," he added.

When pressed to respond if he felt there would be sufficient time today to complete debates on the Bills, Liew (picture) nodded his answer.

"Time has been wasted because some of the MPs are talking on issues not related to the Bill... they talk about so many unrelated issues," he pointed out.

Speaking to The Malaysian Insider earlier, Liew noted that he was in Parliament until midnight yesterday, saying that it was not an abnormal procedure.

"What's wrong? We have time to finish everything tonight. I was here till midnight last night and today will be the same," he said.

Federal opposition lawmakers this morning slammed BN for its plan to push through a whopping eight Bills in Parliament by tonight, accusing the ruling pact of attempting to "bulldoze" the laws in time for the coming general election.

The angry parliamentarians pointed out to The Malaysian Insider via SMSes from the House this morning that these Bills include crucial amendments to Acts involving the elections process, student participation in politics and media freedom.

"I lost count! We are appalled. This bulldozing is atrocious to say the least, it proves that our Parliament is nothing more than a mere rubber stamp," PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar wrote in her message to The Malaysian Insider.

"It is obvious that some of these Bills are rushed thru for the sake of GE (general election), either to control elections practices, or to claim credit prior to GE," Selangor DAP chairman Teresa Kok wrote in her SMS.

The Seputeh MP had earlier stood up in the House to object when Liew moved the motion seeking to adjourn the current sitting only after the eight Bills are debated and passed through the Lower House.

"How could we debate so many Bills? This is a serious matter," she said, her voice raised.

After some taunts from BN backbenchers, the motion was adopted.

The crucial Bills that must be debated and passed in Parliament today include the Election Offences (Amendment) Bill 2012, Universities and University Colleges (Amendment) Bill 2012, Private Higher Educational Institutions (Amendment) Bill 2012, Educational Institutions (Discipline) (Amendment) Bill 2012 and Printing Presses and Publications (Amendment) Bill 2012.

Others include the Jasa Perkasa Persekutuan (Remembrance Allowance) Bill 2012, Pingat Tentera Udara (Remembrance Allowance) Bill 2012 and the Capital Markets and Services (Amendment) Bill 2012.

The Security Offences (Special Measures) Bill 2012, a new law to replace the Internal Security Act 1960, was passed by the Dewan Rakyat on Tuesday after 1½ days of debate."

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