

**Rais says ten minutes airtime is what Pakatan manifesto deserves**  
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**By Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 10 — Datuk Seri Rais Yatim said today the 10-minute airtime given to Pakatan Rakyat (PR) parties to explain their polls manifesto was "suitable".

The interim information, communications and culture minister also said the short time offered to PR was more than enough to showcase PR's pledges.

"It was more than enough because we are only explaining the principles of a party's struggle. So for BN and the opposition, they deserve to receive the respective airtime after we consider how important it is to explain their manifestos.

"For BN, its more than that, it is a commitment and a vow just as announced by the prime minister," Rais (picture) told reporters after attending a closed door meeting between BN chairman Datuk Seri Najib Razak and the coalition's division leaders at PWTC here.

PR had snubbed the offer, calling it a "joke" and a mockery to the freedom of press.

Leaders from the opposition pact said it had wanted the right of reply, not only during the general elections, but at all times in all of the mainstream media and TV stations, almost all of which are BN-controlled.

Free access to media was among the key eight demands made by the opposition and poll reform group Bersih 2.0. It was also one of the recommendations made by a parliamentary select committee for free and fair elections.

Rais, who told state news agency Bernama it was "ok" to use state assets to campaign ahead of the official campaigning period, said the opportunity was provided in respect of the democratic system of the country and described the snub as "arrogant".

Meanwhile, the Elections Commission (EC) claimed the offer was to be serial and not one-off and said the opposition had misunderstood government's intention.

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