

Give opposition leader minister status, moots Kit Siang as parliamentary reform
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By Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, May 10 — The Opposition Leader's position should equal to that of a minister, DAP advisor Lim Kit Siang said today when proposing a series of reforms to Parliament just days after the country's 13th general election.

"Firstly, the Parliamentary Opposition Leader should be given ministerial status as a major commitment to promote and advance parliamentary democracy," Lim told reporters at the party's headquarters here.

He also said the opposition leader, who is now from the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) pact, should be given "full respect" in Parliament and be "fully consulted" over parliamentary matters.

Lim (picture) said the opposition leader should receive a comparable amount of allowance as given to Cabinet ministers now, as well as an official car as part of the "perks and privileges".

In detailing the support that should come with such a post, Lim said there should be at least two political secretaries, one private secretary and three research assistants.

Other reforms that Lim proposed include the allocation of an annual RM500,000 to all MPs, and not just to those from Barisan Nasional (BN) as was currently done.

Lim also said an opposition MP should head the parliament's Public Accounts Committee that monitors the use of public funds to give the committee more bite.

He pointed out that Malaysia had always picked a government MP to head the committee.

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