

DAP MP laments PM's 'truancy' for attending only 7% of Parliament sittings

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By Eileen Ng

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak only attended 26 days of Parliament sittings since he took office in 2009, said a DAP lawmaker.

Er Teck Hwa (DAP - Bakri) said this amounted to a mere 7% of the total 358 days Parliament had met since that time until April this year.

He said with the exception of Najib's budget speech, the premier's attendance does not amount to two hours on average, and he only answered an average of two questions at every sitting.

Er said Najib also never debated with opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Najib's dismal attendance was to be the thrust of Er's adjournment speech this Thursday, but it was rejected by Parliament secretary Datuk Roosme Hamzah who said that it was unrelated to the government's administration and that he could direct his query to the related ministers.

Er said he does not understand why his speech was rejected.

"If a student cut class, his teachers would have scolded him and he might even be canned. But what about the prime minister himself who had played truant by not attending parliamentary sittings?" he asked.

The second-term MP said it is important for Najib to answer lawmakers' queries especially on urgent matters.

"By rejecting my speech with the excuse that it was unrelated to government matters gives an impression that the prime minister's absence is not something to be concerned about," he said.

He suggested a Prime Minister's Question hour be set up, pointing out that such procedure was provided for in the UK's parliamentary system since the 19th century. – June 17, 2014.

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