

Parliament Is Not A Rubber Stamp, Says PM
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak stressed that he has never considered the Parliament as a rubber stamp but rather an effective institution to formulate the laws of the country.

He said to formulate the best laws, the members of legislature were given the opportunity to debate and give proposals on the bill tabled by the government which proved the Parliament was not merely to pass laws put up by the executive.

"While laws are introduced by the executive, the legislature could also give their views and proposals and sometimes, the proposals are accepted and made into amendments into the bill for debate.

"This shows the executive including myself, has never assume the Parliament as a rubber stamp. In fact I appreciate the quality of debate including proposals brought up by members of the Parliament during debate at the Parliament," he said when speaking at the opening of the 2015 Conference of Malaysian Parliament and State Assembly Speakers here Saturday.

The two-day close-door conference was revived by the Parliament after the last conference was held in 2007.

Among others, it is aimed at strengthening ties between Parliament and State Assemblies as a platform to share knowledge and enhance capacity-building towards a more effective and competent administration of assemblies.

Najib said Parliament and State Assembly speakers should prove the effectiveness of their legislature as lawmakers and ensure laws passed were of the highest quality.

The Prime Minister, who is Pekan MP, said among the main challenge faced by them in carrying out their duties and roles during debate was to manage prejudice, perceptions and handle political parties of both the government and opposition.

Najib also called on Parliament and State Assembly speakers to focus on efforts to further boost the reputation, credibility and integrity of their respective legislatures based on the federal or state constitutions and house rules.

While stressing that the culture of open debate should be further enhanced, Najib hoped all speakers would benefit from the conference to exchange views and share experience to improve proceedings in all assemblies.

Najib, who will be tabling the 11th Malaysia Plan on May 21 at Dewan Rakyat, also hoped the institution of Parliament and State Assembly would continue to play their roles as a

check and balance on various government programmes.

In this regard, Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia described the roles of a speaker as being more challenging now to ensure the smooth proceeding of meetings.

"We hope members of Parliament and State Assembly will use the institution with full responsibility not only for passing bills but also as a platform to check and balance of the country's affairs," he said.

Pandikar Amin also said Malaysia would be hosting the 23rd Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) on Jan 9 to 14, 2016 in Kota Kinabalu which would be attended by speakers from 53 Commonwealth countries.

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