

Gooi: 'Insane' to arm Najib with NSC powers
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By FMT Reporters

What's important is that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak was currently being investigated by the MACC for graft over the RM2.6 billion 'donation' and the SRC scandal.

KUALA LUMPUR: It's "insane" to arm the Prime Minister with absolute security powers that could be used to crack down against his political opponents while he's under investigation for one of the biggest financial scandals in the country's history, said Alor Setar MP Gooi Hsiao Leung in a statement. "What's important is that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak was currently being investigated by the MACC for graft over the RM2.6 billion 'donation' and the SRC scandal."

With the Prime Minister armed with powers to issue security orders, he added, legitimate and lawful popular assemblies could be crushed in future without the need for Umno/Barisan Nasional (BN) to rely on the Red Shirts movement "to do their dirty work in racializing and demonizing legitimate popular protests such as those organized by Bersih".

With the ruling coalition's recent horrific record in dealing with race relations issues, such as branding the recent Bersih 4 rally as race-based and supporting the highly racially-charged Red Shirts rally, reiterated Gooi, "the government cannot be trusted to yield such sweeping security powers in good faith".

Gooi was commenting on "the NSC Bill being sneaked into Parliament at the very last minute", and rushed through for a vote on the last day of its sitting. "It was without a doubt, done intentionally by the Umno/BN government, to avoid public scrutiny of the Bill."

Worse still, he said, the leaders of the BN component parties by voting in support for the Bill, have in effect booted themselves out of existence or relevance in determining matters of national security, which at the very least ought to be decided by the Cabinet, and not a separate administrative council headed by the Prime Minister.

Under the NSC Bill, he noted, even the armed forces, which traditionally have been kept out of domestic politics, have been dragooned to be placed under the Prime Minister's control. "The NSC can be used to implement in effect martial law that may be used to suppress the Prime Minister's political opponents."

"The armed forces should only be used to fight external aggressors and not the political battles of the Prime Minister."

Gooi described it as unforgivable and shameful that BN component leaders and their MPs from both Sabah and Sarawak, besides the peninsula, did not only fail to voice their opposition against "such a repressive Bill aimed at perpetuating one man's rule of the country", they have also allowed their "say" on national security issues in Cabinet to be stripped and snatched away. "It's clear for all to see, the political mischief of the NSC Bill was intended to concentrate the country's security powers in the hands of the Prime

Minister alone, entrenching one man's rule further in the face of increasing calls for his resignation."

Under the Bill, Gooi lamented that the National Security Council will have wide powers to define matters of "social political stability" and "national unity" or "any other interests" in determining whether the country's national security has come under threat. "There is no justification whatsoever why NSC led by the Prime Minister should have powers to determine issues of social political stability and national unity."

"These issues of national importance ought to be dealt with by Cabinet, which will include all BN component parties, and together by right, the views of opposition political parties and civil society."

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