

# Malaysia: Local council elections are rakyat's priority!

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Tuesday 2 January 2024, by [SIVARAJAN A.](#) (Date first published: 29 December 2023).

**PSM refutes KPKT Minister Nga Kor Ming's statement that local council elections are not the government's priority at the moment. We would like to remind the Minister that he should set his priorities in accordance with the rakyat's demands and not otherwise.**

His predecessor, the previous KPKT Minister, Zuraida Kamaruddin, was confident that local council elections could be held in the next three years. She said in Dewan Rakyat in 2020 that a number of feasibility studies on local polls were conducted between 2018 and 2019. She added further that an operational committee, made up of NGOs and community leaders, was tasked with preparing papers on the perceptions of the public towards local council elections and suggesting awareness programs so that the public understands the role of local council elections.

We demand that Minister Nga Kor Ming reveal these findings so that we can have an objective assessment of the pros and cons of local elections.

Currently, taxpayer money is being used to pay Members of Parliament, State Assemblymen, and even Ministers to solve council issues. Why are we paying Ministers salaries to Nga Kor Ming to look into public toilet amenities? This is a job for elected local councilors! The KPKT Ministers should be formulating policies to tackle the ever-increasing price of housing, not doing spot checks on toilets! What a waste of resources!

Clearly, both PAS and DAP are not keen to address public woes but only look at their control of political power. PAS is afraid that more DAP representatives will get voted in, as DAP usually has a strong hold in urban areas, whereas PAS is in rural areas. PAS has stooped desperately low to argue that local council elections will only bring about racial tensions, without any basis.

In a recent talk show, PAS Wilayah leader Al Fadhil Ustaz Azhar bluntly said there should be no further discourse on the topic of local council elections. Are they afraid that the rakyat will see through their unsubstantiated fear-mongering lies? Without any study or data to back up their claims that Malays will lose control of the local council if elections are held, it is clear that PAS is the culprit that intends to stir racial disharmony.

As per the Federal Constitution, local councils fall under the purview of state governments. Local councils cannot run rogue! They have to abide by all state policies on the licencing of liquor and entertainment licences. Is PAS not confident that Malay-muslim majority state assemblies will be able to regulate local councils effectively? Don't they even have trust in the local council staff, who are mostly Malay Muslims, to implement policies according to religious sensitivities?

Local council elections are an important component of a working democracy, so that each elected MP's, State Assemblyman's, and local councillors carry out their clearly defined roles and not

overlap each other.

Thus, PSM argues that local council elections are the rakyat's priority and that the government should not capitulate to unsupported fears based ethno-racial arguments. If the government starts to work on it now, we believe that local council elections (at least in certain states) can be implemented together with GE16 in 2027-2028.

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**P.S.**

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