

Zuki: Ombudsman an essential step to improve governance

PUTRAJAYA: The move to set up the Malaysian Ombudsman, a platform for the public to voice their grievances against the public service delivery system, is an important step to improve governance in the public service delivery system, says the Chief Secretary to the Government.

Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali said the Public Complaints Bureau (BPA), jointly with the Prime Minister's Department, had started work on setting up the Ombudsman – an independent body that practises impartiality in resolving maladministration complaints.

He said the draft of the Bill has been prepared and is now in the process of improvement before being submitted to the Attorney General's Chambers and subsequently tabled in the Parliament.

"I hope the Malaysian Ombudsman that will be established soon will continue the legacy of the Public Complaints Bureau and complement the government in upholding transparency and accountability," he said at the Public Complaints Bureau Awards Ceremony here yesterday.

The text of his speech was read out by deputy director-general of Public Service (Operations) Datuk Dr Anesee Ibrahim.

Mohd Zuki said if the management of public complaints is made a strategic core

in ministries and agencies, the country's public service will be better as the number of complaints received can be reduced, Bernama reported.

"This number of complaints is a measuring stick for the effectiveness of the services provided. In effective public complaint management, the best and necessary approach is to treat the complaint as a gift.

"Agencies need to see it as an opportunity to improve our services and not a problem," he added.

Mohd Zuki said substantive complaints, which have merit and reasonable grounds, should be used to improve any weaknesses in procedures, customer charters, organisational management and the service delivery system.

He also asked the complaint managers to apply more flexible elements in finding a solution.

"A complainant-friendly approach can reduce pressure, is not rigid and necessary in various directions, considering that some solutions also require input from various agencies," he said.

Meanwhile, on the Raqib Madani programme, Mohd Zuki requested that the programme, that has been implemented in all ministries this year, also be extended to state governments.