

 Tue, June 23 2009 - BARELY three months after amending the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz has moved for more changes to meet international expectations.

Yesterday, he tabled the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) (Amendment) Bill 2009 for its first reading. The latest round of amendments seeks to address a grouse raised about the transparency in the appointment of Suhakam members.

They also provide for the participation of members of civil society in the appointment process.

The amendments seek to ensure that the decision by a special committee selecting commissioners was binding on the prime minister and that he could not reject any candidates recommended to him by the special committee.

To facilitate this, the bill seeks to delete subsection 11A(6) of the Suhakam Act, which states that the prime minister is not bound by the opinions, views or recommendations of the appointment committee made up of the Chief Secretary to the Government, the Suhakam chairman and three members of civil society upon consultation.

Malaysia missed a 28-day deadline, which ended on May 3, given by the United Nations to challenge the observations of the Accreditation Sub-Committee of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights.