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**URGENT**

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Editor,  
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Sir,

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**Title : "NEW PUBLIC COMPLAINTS UNIT TO LEARN  
FROM PRIVATE SECTOR"**

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In response to the statement made by Y.B. Senator T. Murugiah, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department during his visit to Maxis Complaints and Service Centre in Bandar Sunway which appeared in the News Straits Times (Streets) page S2, we wish to highlight that local authorities under Act 171 is a body corporate with perpetual succession and have the power to make by-laws. Local government, however, is under the jurisdiction of the state government.

However, the Constitution provides that National Council for Local Government (MNKT), to formulate from time to time in consultation with the Federal Government and the State Government a national

policy for the promotion, development and control of Local Government to ensure the uniformity in implementing policies for Local Government. It is therefore to the best interest of all stakeholders that any proposal to form a monitoring and complaints unit governed by the Public Complaints Bureau (PCB) at local government be presented to MNKT for consensus.

We are aware that local authorities always have their hands full with complaints from the public regarding the services provided by them. On the other hand, presently most local authorities already have a public complaint system which the public can seek redress to their complaints. There is no lacking of complaints channel at local authorities. They can either bring up their grouses through their area representatives that are the municipal councilors who keep in touch with the local authorities, or if they prefer be present themselves at local authorities' offices to lodge a complaint. If making a visit to local authority offices is troublesome or sometimes costly, they may opt to call the complaints centre using dedicated telephone number or hotline services. Better still, if they are technology savvy, they can make use of the web-based computer complaints system on a 24 hour basis. Their complaints will be attended to within a very short period of time. The public could also track their complaints through the system. Some local authorities are also providing a venue for complaints through short messaging system (SMS). There is already a complaints committee at local authorities whose term of reference (TOR) includes monitoring, tracking and seek solution to public complaints within the local authority area. At the Ministry's level, Local Government Department renders assistance to the public should they want guidance in getting help from the local

authorities. These departments also make available a web-based complaints system to all local authorities who subscribed to the ePBT System. With all these in place, the public is well assured that their complaints are attended to promptly. However, some complicated issues may take sometime to resolve. Again if the complaints requires funding for example if it involves upgrading works, than a proper financial and procurement procedures must be followed thus require sometimes. But we would like to assure the public that any complaint is a gift to the local authorities in the sense that they are better able to provide services in order to improve the quality of life.

**Prepared by,  
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