

I.S.A. STILL NEEDED

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Dr M: Act cannot be abolished but changes can be made

By NIZAM ISA



KUALA LUMPUR: The Internal Security Act is still needed under certain circumstances and cannot be totally abolished, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

However, the Prime Minister did not dismiss the possibility of the Government amending some of the provisions under the Act, like the period of detention.

The Home Ministry would have to review the provisions first, he said, adding that the final decision rested with the Cabinet.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Home Minister, said the Government could not repeal the ISA as some quarters may take advantage of the situation.

The Government had to be very careful in making such a decision although there were now no "irresponsible activities" that could affect national security, he told reporters at the Home Ministry's Family Day outing yesterday.

"We have to be very cautious because sometimes when we lift up the lid, everything will come out again.

"They don't do it (activities that could harm national security) now because the Act is there but they may start again if we abolish the ISA," he said.

On Tuesday, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the ISA would be reviewed to suit the country's present peaceful climate.

Anwar also said the review was necessary as the

PM: No decision on review of ban

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present situation was different from the time the ISA was introduced.

On the Government's ban on the giving of new government contracts to British companies, Dr Mahathir said no decision had been made on the matter.

"We are studying the matter since they have kicked out (former *Sunday Times* editor) Andrew Neil and his friends. But

we have not decided when to lift the ban," he said.

Neil has been seconded to Fox Television Network in New York to launch a flagship current affairs show.

Asked to comment on Neil's statement that he would use his present position to continue investigating Malaysia, Dr Mahathir said:

"Let him do it. Nobody will believe him because it is only his personal vendetta."

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