

PAS reserves cheer on PM's ISA abolition
Malaysiakini.com
September 16,2011

PAS is waiting for the alternative laws that will be drawn up to replace the Internal Security Act (ISA) before commenting on the prime minister's announcement yesterday of intentions to abolish the draconian law.

PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang (left) told party organ Harakahdaily today that it was too early for PAS to make a stand on Najib Abdul Razak's Malaysia Day announcement.

"PAS is taking the wait and see stand on the issue of the abolition of the ISA and a few other acts announced by the PM.

"This is because we have to first see what alternative laws that the government says will replace them are.

"It is far too early for us to give our response to the abolition," said Hadi in a statement to Harakadaily.

He said he had his doubts about the announcement as it is being made on the heels of an impending general election.

"It is being made ahead of a general election that appears to be politically motivated, and an election offering by the BN.

"After thousands have been victims of the draconian Act, suddenly with the election around the corner it is abolished," added Hadi.

In a special televised address late yesterday evening on the eve of Malaysia Day, Najib announced that the ISA would be abolished along with three Emergency declarations as well as review of several other oppressive laws that the opposition and civil society had been fighting long to repeal.

Cut the 'wayang'

Meanwhile PAS Youth Johor chief Suhaizan Kayat said the announcement showed that the GE was just around the corner.

Suhaizan (below) said it was a "radical" move for Umno, who had relied on such oppressive laws to stay in power.

"...For 50 years Umno-BN had made the ISA its weapon to defend its power, yet Najib - at a time when the BN had lost its two-thirds parliamentary majority, and when the people now have access to alternative news through the internet and social media like Facebook and Twitter - makes an aggressive move to 'demolish' his shield," he said in a statement today.

"What I am concerned about is when all these suggestions of abolition will be implemented. Whatever Acts, amendments to or abolition of, have to be tabled, supported and debated in Parliament first.

"As long as these matters are not resolved before the GE13, we cannot place high hopes towards this reform, because until now Najib has not even resolved the really big questions such as the setting up of the parliamentary select committee (PSC) to study (electoral reform)," he said.

"Furthermore Najib has failed to give any guarantee that the GE13 will be held only after the PSC has implemented its findings," he added.

He reminded Umno-BN not to "main wayang" (put up a show) in this age of the alternative media,

because the rakyat would not be fooled by Najib's promises if they are not followed by concrete and timely action.

'Don't thank Najib'

Meanwhile PKR deputy chief Azmin Ali said credit should go to the struggles of the thousands who have suffered under the draconian laws installed by Umno-BN since the country's independence, that has pressured Najib into making his announcement.

"If not for the persistence of those who have constantly pressured Najib (to abolish the oppressive laws), surely the PM would not have made his announcement yesterday..." said Azmin (right) in a statement today.

Hence, he said, this was no "gift" from Najib on Malaysia Day, but the result of a "bitter struggle" by individuals, political parties and NGOs.

"It's just like how we do not thank the British for granting our independence on Aug 13, 1957 but we celebrate the date as the fruition of our struggles against the coloniser," he said.

Azmin added that in line with Najib's announcement should be the following immediate steps:

- * the release of all those detained presently without trial, or to have them tried in court
- * the closure of all detention centres catering to such laws, in particular Kamunting and Simpang Renggam detention centres
- * investigation into all claims of abuse under detention

Najib, he said, also needs to issue an apology to acknowledge that the government had wronged the victims of unlawful detention.

He also called for the establishment of a National Consultative Council to study any new laws replacing the present ones, that would include Pakatan Rakyat and NGO representatives.

suara keadilan report on felda bankrupt 220610The party deputy also stressed that PKR will not accept Najib's announcement as meaningful, unless it is backed by action, namely in allowing the party organ Keadilan to be published.

Last year the Home Ministry had slapped PKR's official organ with a show-cause letter over several articles it had published such as 'Felda is bankrupt' and has not renewed the party's publishing permit that expired on June 30 last year.

Koh: Free the media

Meanwhile Gerakan president Koh Tsu Koon said he welcomed the PM's announcement saying the ISA and the Emergency Declarations had "outlived their relevance, hence it is only appropriate they are repealed and replaced by specific laws to deal with acts of terrorism and sedition".

PSM6 sugumaranHe said he particularly welcomed the review of the Printing Presses and Publications Act.

"The advent and advances of the cyber media have rendered restrictive control and censorship of the printed media ineffective and irrelevant indeed," said Koh in a statement today.

"Let the mainstream media flourish so that it can further enhance credibility. I am confident that most, if not all, journalists will handle this greater freedom with an even greater sense of professionalism and

responsibility," said the former Penang chief minister, who lost his long-held post to the opposition during the 'political tsunami' of 2008.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/175994>