

Najib urged to free all ISA detainees in wake of new law
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Since the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 has been passed, the prime minister should have the present Internal Security Act (ISA) detainees released, said the Malaysian Bar president.

Lim Chee Wee (below) said the government needed to keep up the momentum to free the country from the "negative legacy of past laws".

NONE "It is in this light that the Malaysian Bar calls on the (Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak) to intervene and revoke the detention orders on the 45 individuals who will remain incarcerated under the ISA until their respective detention orders expire.

"The government should either charge or release the 20 Malaysians and 25 foreign nationals still being detained," he said in a statement today.

He noted that some of the ISA detainees are on a hunger strike while some foreign nationals have not had any contact with their diplomatic missions in Malaysia.

"In order to prevent any untoward incidents, and so as to fully end the existence of the ISA, they should either be charged in court or set free, and if necessary, sent back to their respective countries," said Lim.

He said as the country was already poised on the "eve of the actual abolition of the ISA" that would materialise when the new Act comes into force, the PM must act to show his commitment to his promised "transformation".

NONE However he said that the Bar had its concerns "over the lack of safeguards in certain provisions of the new legislation".

Earlier this week Gerakan Mansuhkan ISA chairperson Syed Ibrahim Syed Noh criticised the new law as being "more dangerous" than the ISA it is supposed to replace.

"These (new provisions under the new law) look good, but Sosma hides some unhealthy things," Syed Ibrahim told a forum in Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday.

Among his complaints were that once the court acquits a person of an offence under Sosma, the public prosecutor can make an oral application to the court to detain the person further until all avenues of appeal have been exhausted.