

Repealing Sedition Act was PM's suggestion, says Subra

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By Ram Anand

The government's intention to repeal the Sedition Act was a "suggestion" by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, Health Minister S Subramaniam said today.

Subramaniam also said the cabinet "will consider" the prime minister's statement to abolish the Act and "make a good decision".

NONE "The prime minister is the leader of the country, he has the right to make suggestions," Subramaniam told reporters at the Parliament lobby when asked if Najib had spoken ahead of the cabinet in announcing the intended repeal.

When told that Najib had also announced last year that the National Harmony Act would replace the Sedition Act, Subramaniam said the premier must bring the matter to the cabinet's attention again.

"He has to bring it back to the cabinet and state his suggestions," he said.

Asked if the Act is being used to stifle political dissent, he replied: "We have allowed for a lot of political views and we will allow for that to continue, don't worry."

He said that the MIC would support either the repeal of the Act or its continued enforcement on condition that it upholds the principle of free speech as well as the principle of responsibility for free speech in order to preserve peace.

"If it hinders freedom of speech (or) expression to a great extent, then we must review (it), but so long as it provides the two principles," he added.

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