

'Najib's gov't backtracked on Sosma promise'
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PKR vice-president N Surendran has accused the Najib Abdul Razak's administration of having "broken its word" in the latest arrest of a political activist under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma).

Referring to the arrest of Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia's (SAMM) activist Saiden Ismail (left) by counter-terrorism police on Wednesday, Surendran said this is as Section 4(3) of the Sosma clearly states that no person is to be arrested and detained solely for his political belief or political activity.

"We are shocked and appalled by this arrest of a political activist under counter- terrorism laws. No evidence whatsoever has been produced linking Saiden with any kind of militant activity.

"If there is any such evidence of terror activity, why not charge Saiden in open court?," he said in a statement today.

Surendran said the recent use of Sosma was akin to bringing back the highly unpopular Internal Security Act (ISA) through the back-door.

"In its effect Sosma is similar to the ISA, as no bail is allowed pending trial and appeals. Through the Sosma, the government has re-introduced the ISA through the backdoor," the MP for Padang Serai said.

The ISA was officially abolished in 2012 although the last six detainees under the draconian act, which allowed two-years detention without trial, were only freed earlier this year.

A popular movement arose to protest against ISA after it was used by ex-premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad to carry out the governments dragnet operation codenamed "Ops Lalang" in 1987, which over a hundred opposition figures were jailed.

In his statement, Surendran noted that the Sosma detainee Saiden was "a strong critic of the Umno/BN government."

"We are also gravely concerned for Saiden's well-being, in view of the physical abuse and torture that happened to detainees under the old ISA," Surendran added.

He called for Saiden, and all others recently arrested under Sosma 2012 , be immediately freed.

"We further call upon the government to abolish the Sosma 2012, and investigate and charge suspects under ordinary criminal laws," he added.

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