

**Najib lied about repealing the Sedition Act**  
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MP SPEAKS On July 11, 2012, Najib Abdul Razak announced the repeal of the Sedition Act 1948 during the Attorney-General Chamber's dinner.

The announcement came as part of the prime minister's slew of so-called "legislative reforms" to increase civil liberties, which were initiated during the eve of Malaysia Day in 2011 in view of the impending general election.

Malaysians waited with abated breath for the abolition of the archaic Sedition Act. The May 2013 general election came and went, giving the prime minister another term in power, despite the BN losing the popular vote. Nothing changed.

When questioned about the lack of progress by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World News in London during his visit in July 2013, Najib insisted that the draconian Act would be repealed and a new "National Harmony Act" would be put in place.

"We will amend the Act but we want to keep Malaysia peaceful and harmonious," he added.

The prime minister also defended to the international audience that his government has "shown an awful lot of latitude to people who protest against the government, but people cannot say something that will undermine the stability of our country."

However, ever since the proposed repeal was announced, Malaysians have witnessed a record number of Pakatan Rakyat politicians and civil activists charged under the Sedition Act, the completely opposite of what Najib promised the people.

Last year, PKR's Tian Chua, Tamrin Ghafar of PAS (right) and activists Haris Ibrahim, Adam Adli and Safwan Anang were charged with sedition.

This year, the late DAP national chairperson Karpal Singh was found guilty of sedition, purely for citing constitutional provisions for a ruler in a state to be taken to court. For upholding our Federal Constitution, Karpal was fined RM4,000.

If not for his untimely passing, he would have been disqualified from his parliamentary seat if the decision is upheld during appeal. Worse, the attorney-general went on to appeal for a jail sentence to be imposed on Karpal, despite his partially paralysed condition.

This week, DAP vice-chairperson Teresa Kok became the latest victim of a politically-motivated sedition charge.

Kok was charged over her satirical “Onederful Malaysia” video that was published in February this year. Nothing in the charge sheet produced by the Attorney-General’s Chambers referred to the typically sensitive subjects of race, religion and royalty.

Instead, Kok was charged with criticising the incompetence of the government in handling the security situation in Sabah, which has resulted in multiple tourist kidnappings, as well as criticising the Malaysian education system.

Just a hypocritical boast

If the latest charge against Kok using the Sedition Act isn’t a clear cut abuse of the Act to suppress vocal dissent against the government, then what is?

The prime minister is a hypocrite to boast to the world that he had “shown an awful lot of latitude to people who protest against the government”. Clearly, none of the above victims of the Act had said anything that “will undermine the stability (or security) of the country”.

They have, at best, undermined the credibility of the BN government, which must be allowed in any democratic country.

It is clear from the actions of the Najib administration that he has no intention to repeal the Act. Instead the Act will be used more viciously against BN’s political opponents to curtail the freedom of speech and the country’s democratic space.

What is most sad is that in Malaysia, a prime minister who has lied to the citizens, and repeated the same lie to the rest of the world, gets to keep his job by abusing the draconian laws in his power.