

Prove rakyat want ISA gone, Perkasa tells Najib
MalaysiaKini.com
May 12, 2014

Malay rights pressure group Perkasa has challenged Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to conduct a referendum to show that most Malaysians wanted to see the Internal Security Act (ISA) repealed.

Referring to a media interview with Najib, Perkasa's Perlis chief Ameir Hassan said it was not Umno members, but “extremists” and “radicals” who wanted the repeal.

They also include a “small group of Malays” and those who are anti-government and want to sow seeds of racial disunity.

“(They are also) the opposition, especially the DAP and PKR, who want to unconstitutionally topple an elected government...

“Perkasa urges Najib to conduct a nationwide referendum to find out clearly if the rakyat feels the ISA is no longer needed.

“This should start with a poll among Umno members, first at the division level annual general meetings, as feedback to Perkasa indicates that most Umno members do not support the repeal,” he said.

In a statement late yesterday, Ameir also claimed that “most Umno ministers” met by Perkasa lamented the repeal.

In an interview with BernamaTV yesterday, Najib said “the majority” of Malaysians backed his decision to repeal the ISA in September 2011.

“I believe the majority of Malaysians want more latitude for political discourse. If you make an evaluation, not all want to return to the era of the ISA,” he said.

Asked about the ISA repeal in an interview with Utusan Malaysia published yesterday, he said there are “differing views” in society and that some voices come only from a small segment.

“The question is whether these voices reflect the majority or not. Or whether this is only from a small segment of society. This is something we need to consider,” he reportedly said.

'ISA needed to keep all races in check'

Meanwhile, the Perkasa leader argued that the ISA is essential to monitor the three major

races in Malaysia.

“(This is to ensure) they respect each other in their daily lives, help one another in the economy and cooperate politically in a healthy manner, while respecting each others' beliefs,” he said.

“The ISA is the only law which allows anyone to be nabbed, regardless of stature or position, if he/she does anything to undermine racial unity, causing public distress and leading to chaos.”

He also argued that the ISA is the “backbone” of Article 149 of the federal constitution and should not have been repealed without support from two-thirds of Parliament.

Article 149 refers to special laws against subversion and acts that undermine public order.

The ISA has since been replaced with the Security Offences and Special Measures Act (Sosma).

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