

## **Sedition Act repeal not final despite PM's pledge**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Sept 7, 2014**

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin today said the planned repeal of the Sedition Act is not final despite his boss Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's pledge to abolish the colonial era law.

"The government has not made any decision yet to abolish the Act, replace it with a new Act or amend the current Act," he was quoted as saying by Bernama, when launching the Batu Umno division delegates meeting today.

The comments came just two days after Najib (left) said the Sedition Act will be abolished and replaced with the National Harmony Act.

The government-sponsored National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) has submitted three new laws dubbed the "Harmony Bills" to the Attorney-General's Chambers for consideration to replace the Sedition Act.

The replacement laws drafted by the bi-partisan NUCC which includes the Bar Council are the Racial and Religious Hate Crimes Bill, National Harmony and Reconciliation Bill and National Harmony and Reconciliation Commission Bill.

However, Muhyiddin today dismissed the draft bills as solely being the effort of the Bar Council which is not endorsed by the government and urged Umno grassroots not to be concerned about it.

He stressed the Attorney-General Chamber's would still have the last say.

'New law to keep Sedition Act elements'

"The people may be influenced by the draft by the Bar Council to repeal the Sedition Act. But my advice is to wait for the draft from the government to be completed," he said.

Meanwhile, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Nancy Shukri (right) insisted the Sedition Act will be repealed, but not any time soon, according to Umno Online.

The de facto law minister said the Sedition Act cannot be repealed until its replacement law comes in, which is not until next year.

"The prime minister already stated that the Sedition Act 1948 will be repealed but the government will not repeal it until there is a replacement Act," she was quoted as saying.

In a related development, Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi stressed that any

replacement law that comes into place will still retain elements of the Sedition Act.

"We should know the prime minister's intention to abolish the Sedition Act does not mean it is to abolish all the elements in the Act," he was quoted as saying in Bernama.

Some of these elements, he said, may be strengthened in the replacement law.

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