

NYT: Najib gov't's use of Sedition Act 'deplorable'
MalaysiaKini.com
Oct 7 2014

Leading United States daily The New York Times (NYT) has slammed the Malaysian government for its rampant use of the Sedition Act, despite Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's promise of reform.

In an editorial published in its print version today, NYT said the Act is so broad that it is "an invitation to authoritarian abuse".

It added that the Najib administration has also "made full use of the law to hound critics" since the 13th general election, although Najib promised to do away with the Act.

"Mr Najib's crackdown is a deplorable attack on free speech and a serious threat to democracy.

"He appeared to understand this danger when he promised to repeal the Sedition Act. He should do so immediately," NYT said.

In the past months, two academicians, lawyers, politicians, activists and a journalist have been either been investigated, arrested or charged under the Act.

Although promising to repeal the Act in 2012, Najib said last month the government is still studying whether to repeal or replace it, given differing views from stakeholders.

Public criticism has also prompted Attorney-General Abdul Gani Patail to announce that his office will be reviewing all cases under the Act.