

Internal Security Act To Be Abolished, Says PM
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KUALA LUMPUR -- The Internal Security Act (ISA) 1960 will be abolished and two new laws will be introduced to safeguard peace and order, Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak said.

The prime minister also announced that the government would repeal the Banishment Act 1959 and reviewing other laws to be in line with current needs.

A comprehensive study will be carried out on the Restricted Residence Act 1993 and the Printing Presses and Publication Act 1984 where annual renewals would be done away with, and replaced with issuance of licence until it is revoked.

Announcing the matter last night in his special Malaysia Day message, Najib said the two new laws would be formulated "under the spirit and umbrella" of Article 149 of the Federal Constitution to prevent subversive elements as well as fighting organised terrorism and crime, in order to safeguard peace and public order.

In the message delivered in front of 800 people at Angkasapuri and aired live over TV1 and TVi, the prime minister said the new laws replacing the ISA would provide for a shorter detention period.

He added that extension of detention can only be done through a court order, except in the law concerning terrorism where the power remained with the minister.

"Generally, the power to extend the detention period will shift from the executive to the judiciary, except in matters concerning terrorism," he said.

Najib had promised when he first took over the helm of the country's administration on April 3, 2009 that he would carry out a comprehensive review of the ISA.

Najib said last night that the government would ensure that the rights of those being taken action under the new law would be safeguarded in line with the spirit of the Federal Constitution.

He said the government also assured that individuals would not be detained because of their political ideologies.

"The government will also review Section 27 of the Police Act 1967, taking into account the provision in Article 10 of the Federal Constitutions concerning freedom of assembly," he said.

Najib stressed however that stern action would remain against street demonstrators.

He said that the permit to assemble would be given under certain set of criteria to be determined later, taking into consideration the norms at the international level.

Najib said the government would not hesitate to amend or repeal laws which are no longer relevant.

(Bernama)