

**Government Open To Views When Amending AUKU - Saifuddin  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 17 (Bernama) - The government is open to views of various quarters when amending Section 15 of University and University Colleges Act (AUKU) to make it more comprehensive and transparent.

Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah said although the ministry plans to amend AUKU, there are also proposals to repeal and replace it with a new act.

"The ministry is open to all possibilities. We are organising open discussions to sincerely seek opinion and feedback from all stakeholders.

"Amending and repealing the act are two major issues raised by various quarters," he said after chairing the first session of AUKU roundtable discussion here Saturday.

Saifuddin also said that a separate meeting will be held soon to discuss the Magna Carta for Student Act 2008, an alternative act proposed by students.

"The matter is not new but it has never been discussed. We can have different views but must respect the views of students who made the proposal several years ago.

Other than the proposed repeal of the act, Saifuddin said other proposals include student participation as representatives in AUKU Amendment Committee.

The government has yet to decide whether other sections in AUKU and other higher education acts would be amended.

"I can't say much for now. I am taking notes and will definitely report to the minister."

Saifuddin said AUKU draft amendments are expected to be tabled in parliament in March next year.

He also accepted a memorandum from Academic Freedom (Bebas) chairman Muhd Safwan Anang@Talib which among others, demanded the repeal of AUKU, at Putra World Trade Centre(PWTC) building.

Earlier, about 200 university students representing Bebas marched from Masjid Jamek to Dataran Merdeka at 2pm this afternoon.

They then proceed to the office of Human Rights Commission Malaysia (Suhakam) in Jalan Sultan Ismail to hand over a memorandum to Suhakam Commissioner Muhammad Sha'ani Abdullah and dispersed at about 4pm.

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