

**Political Transformation Is Najib's Legacy As PM**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 25 (Bernama) -- The announcement made by the government to repeal the Internal Security Act 1960 (ISA) and several other legislations has not only created history but also brought about change to the national political landscape in 2011.

The bold move taken by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to implement his Political Transformation Programme (PTP) took many by surprise and was seen as a slap in the opposition's face.

On Sept 15, Najib announced the repeal of ISA, Banishment Act 1959, and a review of the Restricted Residence Act 1933, Printing Presses and Publication Act 1984 and Section 27 of Police Act 1967.

The ISA will be replaced by two new acts, deemed more suitable, providing a balance between individual rights, civil liberty and safeguards for public order.

The two new pieces of legislation will be tabled in parliament in March.

This, the prime minister said, would pave the way for Malaysia to practice a mature and respected democracy.

In October, the Dewan Rakyat approved the repeal of the Banishment Act 1959 without amendment.

This was followed by the repeal of the Restricted Residence Act 1933 and the release of 125 individuals detained under the act. Two hundred unserved warrants had also been cancelled.

Najib said the repeal of the acts was part of the PTP, and complemented the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

The seriousness of the government in carrying out the political transformation process, Najib said, was not influenced by any party.

"No one has put pressure on us to do this. The government made the decision on its own accord and initiative," Najib said.

He said the PTP took into account the aspirations towards a modern, progressive and developed Malaysia with a functional democracy.

It was aimed at balancing the security needs and individual freedom by taking into account the complex national plurality and the threats of global terrorism post-Sept 11, he said.

The opposition was quick to hop onto the issue and said that the political transformation was their idea, a claim which Najib has dismissed as reckless and frivolous.

Other than stamping out outdated and oppressive legislations, Najib's PTP can also be seen in the way his administration deals with pressure from the opposition, by putting the larger interest of the people first, particularly in handling the July 9 illegal gathering in the national capital.

In line with the motto, "feeling the pulse of the people", Najib's PTP also entails employing a fresh approach -- by doing away with confrontational approach and replacing it with dialogue, and restriction with openness.

This was exemplified by the tabling of the Peaceful Assembly Bill 2011 to replace Section 27 of the Police Act aimed at allowing citizens to gather peacefully.

The bill which was approved by the Dewan Rakyat at the end of last month was one of the efforts of the government to transform the framework of existing law.

The motion to abolish the Emergency Proclamations of 1966, 1969 and 1977 was approved by the Dewan Rakyat last month and by the Dewan Negara this month.

In line with Najib's determination to implement phase two of the PTP -- marked by the abolition of these proclamations -- 36 detainees under the Emergency Ordinance were also released.

He did not stop there. The government decided to amend Section 15 of the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA) 1974 to allow students to join political parties when they reach 21.

The move was seen as capable of bringing back the confidence on the part of the young voters who, prior to this, were inclined to the agenda of the opposition.

This year will go down in history as the year of political transformation, a legacy of Najib, the sixth Prime Minister of the Malaysia.

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