

UUCA must be totally repealed, SMM tells Najib
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JOHOR BARU, Nov 25 — A national coalition of student groups stood by its call today for Datuk Seri Najib Razak to repeal the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA) despite the prime minister promising amendments to allow students over the age of 21 to join political parties.

Solidariti Mahasiswa Malaysia (SMM) said during the PKR youth national congress here that the amendment "is not enough."

"It must be totally repealed. Students must be independent," said Adam Adli Abd Halim, chairman of Legasi Mahasiswa Progresif, a coalition member of SMM.

Najib had said yesterday the government would soon amend Section 15 of the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA) to allow students aged above 21 to become members of political parties.

He stressed, however, that the government would still appeal the recent court ruling declaring the section unconstitutional and that political activities on campuses would still be strictly prohibited.

In a majority 2-1 judgement earlier this month, a three-man panel of judges ruled that Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) had breached Article 10 of the country's highest law when it disciplined four students involved in a political campaign last year under Section 15(5)(5)(a) of the UUCA.

But Adam Adli said, "Political parties must appreciate that students are the third force. Our opinion should not be belittled."

"We have a track record of fighting for the rights of the public," he said.

The student group recently led two on-campus protests following the International Islamic University's suspension of Prof Dr Abdul Aziz Bari for questioning remarks made by the Selangor Sultan in connection with a church raid in August.

It also rejected the offer by Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein to move their protests to a stadium.

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