

Suaram calls for ISA reconciliation panel
The Malaysian Insider
September 16, 2011
By Yow Hong Chieh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 16 — The Najib administration should form a truth and reconciliation panel for those detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA) to bring closure to the nation's "collective angst" over the law that allows detention without trial, a human rights group said today.

Suara Rakyat Malaysia (Suaram) director Dr Kua Kia Soong said the commission was necessary for the more than 10,000 Malaysians who have been detained under the security law since it was enacted in 1960.

"It's not so much an apology but... a recognition of the pain and the injustice and whatever violations of people's rights that the government is responsible for," he told The Malaysian Insider.

Kua (picture) pointed out that use of the ISA has had very serious consequences on the nation's political fortunes, including the decimation in the 1960s of the entire leadership of the Labour Party, then Malaysia's strongest opposition party.

He said Najib's move last night to scrap the ISA and other restrictive laws was a vindication of the two-party system, which grew out of Pakatan Rakyat's historic gains in Election 2008.

"Barisan Nasional can no longer rule as it likes. It has to consider Pakatan Rakyat, it has to consider all the other demands by the human rights organisations," Kua said.

The Najib administration should ratify the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNHR) and other conventions on civil and political rights if it truly wished for Malaysia to join the ranks of developed nations, he added.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced last night the repeal of the ISA and the three Emergency Declarations when both the Dewan Negara and Dewan Rakyat have their next sitting.

Najib said new laws will be enacted to protect the peace, harmony and security of the country.

He also announced that the government will do away with annual printing and publishing permits with permits that can be cancelled if regulations are flouted.

The Malaysian Insider
Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/suaram-calls-for-isa-reconciliation-panel/>