

A-G dodges ISA query
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 19 — The Attorney-General has refused to comment on the status of new laws being drafted now to replace the Internal Security Act (ISA), saying it was a work-in-progress.

"I have to sit down and work. Let me work first," a tight-lipped Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail told reporters as he was leaving the International Conference on Financial Crime and Terrorism Financing at the JW Marriott Hotel here.

When pressed, he merely repeated, "Let me work. Let me work," and refused to say when his office would complete the draft laws and other legal reforms.

Last Thursday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced that the ISA and the three Emergency Declarations would be repealed when both the Dewan Negara and Dewan Rakyat next sit.

He said new anti-terrorism laws will be enacted to protect the peace, harmony and security of the country.

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

Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein later said Malaysia would look to the US Patriot Act and the UK's Anti-Terrorism Act when drawing up the new security laws, which would still allow for detention without trial.

He said those currently detained under the ISA were linked to terrorism and would remain in custody until the two new Acts are enacted.

The new laws were now being drafted by the Attorney-General's Chambers, Hishammuddin added.

De facto law minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz had said he expected the laws to be tabled in March next year and not during the next Parliament sitting in October.

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