

**RR orders will be lifted by tomorrow, says Hishammuddin**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 — Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein confirmed today that the 125 individuals placed under restricted residence will be served with release orders by tomorrow.

The move comes as Parliament debates the repeal of the Restricted Residence Act today, the first security law to be abolished under the Prime Minister's latest slew of reform pledges.

Speaking to reporters at Parliament lobby here, Hishammuddin (picture) said the release orders were signed today following the tabling of the repeal by Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"Under the process, the orders have to be served onto them (detainees) by the OCPDs and I believe, by the very latest, (they will be served) by tomorrow.

"Groundwork was done much earlier... this was not something we plucked from the air. We had to find out where they were and where they are going to," he said.

Hishammuddin also gave his assurance that his ministry and the Royal Malaysia Police would work towards maintaining public wellbeing despite the individuals' release.

"Today's debate (in Parliament) touched a lot on politics. But we (government) are more concerned about safety and the process going through," he said.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar also vouched that the repeal of the RRA would not affect national security, saying present laws were enough to preserve public peace and order.

Hishammuddin said the government would now focus on "capacity building", saying it was imperative to ensure the force was well-equipped with equipment and trained personnel.

"We feel these laws are not relevant because the world is now borderless. So we are pragmatic enough and will move forward," he said.

Najib tabled the repeal for the second reading in the House today, calling the Act "obsolete and irrelevant" and adding that a further 200 warrants due to be served under the law would also be cancelled by the home ministry.

"Virtual communication has become an alternative to individuals who are limited in physical contact," he told Parliament.

Najib is also due to table the repeal of the Banishment Act later today.

The repeal of the two laws kicks off Najib's reform package as announced in his Malaysia Day address.

His raft of reforms, which includes amendments to the Police Act to allow for freedom of assembly next month, the repeal of the Internal Security Act in March and a parliamentary select committee on electoral improvements, appear geared to win back middle Malaysia before snap polls expected early next year.

His administration had come under heavy fire internationally for its clampdown on the July 9 Bersih rally for free and fair elections.

Police had fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse tens of thousands of demonstrators in chaotic scenes which resulted in nearly 1,700 arrested, scores injured and the death of an ex-soldier.

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