

**Nazri confirms 'peaceful assembly' law to be tabled next week**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**November 20, 2011**  
**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 20 — The government confirmed today a law regulating public gatherings will be tabled in Parliament next week, continuing Datuk Seri Najib Razak's reform package.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz told a press conference today the Cabinet had agreed to table a "peaceful assembly" bill.

"It will be tabled by the prime minister. The date has not been confirmed but the first reading will be done next week," the de facto law minister said in his Padang Rengas constituency in Perak.

The Malaysian Insider reported this morning that the new law will replace Section 27 of the Police Act, doing away with police permits for mass assemblies other than street protests.

But the new law will require the "collaboration" of various parties before a public gathering can be held.

"The law will outline when and where a gathering or march can be held. For example, it can only be held on weekends or certain days in specific areas so public order is not disturbed," a source told The Malaysian Insider.

There were also suggestions that public assemblies only be allowed at specific venues, such as stadiums.

Najib is expected to table the bill as soon as Budget 2012 is passed. Debate on the supply bill is scheduled to be completed on Wednesday.

The prime minister promised a raft of reforms in his Malaysia Day address on September 15, including the repeal of the controversial Internal Security Act (ISA) and doing away with annual permits for the print media, saying he wanted to give Malaysians more freedom.

He further said the government will review Section 27 of the Police Act by taking into account Article 10 of the Federal Constitution that relates to freedom of assembly.

According to Najib, the government will allow public gatherings based on international norms while taking a firm stand against street demonstrations.

The Restricted Residence and Banishment Acts were already repealed last month, and Najib has said the repeal of the ISA will take place in March after two replacement laws have been drafted.

Nazri added today that Parliament will set aside four days from November 24 to December 1, to debate the proposed law

The Malaysian Insider

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