

**Najib: Laws that protect public interest need not be amended**  
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KUANTAN, Jan 21 — Laws should not be amended if they are seen to be in the interest of the people, Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

The prime minister said laws should be retained if society says they should be maintained.

He was responding to a statement by Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim in an interview with a foreign television station recently on the need to amend laws which he perceived as archaic.

On another matter, Najib said there was a law on defamation which allowed for people who insulted others without justification to be sued.

On Anwar's claim that the sodomy charge was aimed at embarrassing him, Najib was quoted by Bernama as saying: "It's not to embarrass (him). This concerned a complaint made by an individual; under the country's law everyone regardless of his or her position has the same right."

The prime minister also criticised opposition parties for practising double standards.

"There is an element of double standards. For example they talk about democracy, but only certain newspapers can attend their press conferences, and there are some newspapers which are prevented from attending them.

"Whereas if we believe in the freedom of the media, why should we prevent certain media from attending the press conference. This is only an example," Najib was quoted as saying.

He said there could not be two sets of laws — one for the opposition, and the other for the government.

On the study by the University of Malaya's Centre for Democracy & Elections that 43 per cent of the people are confident that the Barisan Nasional will be returned to power in the next general election, Najib was quoted as saying: "I'm excited if there is such a report. But what are the factors for such confidence?

"One of the factors may be that they are confident in the national agenda to achieve transformation to become a developed nation, and we have proven in the past three years through the many changes, numerous new ideas."