

Check yourselves post-ISA, Dr M urges Malaysians
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TANJUNG MALIM, Sept 21 — Malaysians must restrain themselves from harming national security once the Internal Security Act (ISA) is scrapped, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has said.

The former prime minister questioned if Malaysians would take advantage of the law's repeal to engage in activities that could threaten the nation, but added that he hoped people would be able to handle this newfound responsibility.

"I hope Malaysians are mature enough to understand that, while there is no law, but self-control must be exercised.

"You must discipline yourself not to undermine the country's security," he told reporters here after his executive talk at Sultan Idris Education University here today.

He added that he hoped the US and UK would repeal their heavily criticised anti-terrorist laws now that the ISA was going to be repealed.

Dr Mahathir (picture) also said the new security laws that will replace the ISA should incorporate judicial oversight to ensure the government of the day does not abuse preventive detention laws.

"But with court trials, those with good lawyers will get off. If they have no money to hire a good lawyer, sometimes they don't get off," he said.

Last Thursday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced a slew of reforms to security and press laws, including the repeal of the ISA which allows for indefinite detention without trial.

The ISA will be replaced by two laws that deal with terrorism as well as issues relating to race and religion.

A colonial-era law designed to deal with the communist insurgency, the ISA gained infamy during the 1987 Operasi Lalang crackdown during the Mahathir administration, which saw two dailies were closed along with two weekly newspapers and 106 people held without trial.

Dr Mahathir had earlier voice his support for Najib's move to scrap the ISA, saying it would put Malaysia on higher moral ground than countries like the US and UK, which passed controversial anti-terrorism laws in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

But the outspoken former prime minister has also warned that extremists may take advantage of the new space to pursue their own agendas once the ISA is repealed.

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/check-yourselves-post-isa-dr-m-urges-malaysians/>