

No more laws that restrict human rights, Najib promises
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The government will not introduce laws which restrict human rights and liberties to rein in crime, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak (pic) promised.

The recent spate of violent crimes involving firearms has led to a growing chorus of demands from certain quarters for the government to reinstate preventive laws.

But Najib disagreed with the demands, saying he will not reinstate the powers to detain individuals without trial that he has abolished.

"We are doing our best to find a good balance to ensure that human rights are not affected but to defend public interest as well," he said.

"This is what is needed for a more matured society," he said, adding that it was a fine juggling act.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had warned that Malaysians would have to pay a price for the more liberal brand of democracy they were demanding.

Mahathir, who is also one of Najib's staunchest critics on the repeal of preventive laws, said the absence of preventive laws in Malaysia could result in a chaos similar to what was happening in Egypt.

However, Najib pointed out the problem with preventive detention is that the crime had not been committed yet.

"How do you arrest somebody if that person has not committed a crime? If it's on a mere suspicion, it's insufficient ground to arrest somebody on the basis of preventive laws."

On July 26, Najib had announced that the government would be "mindful" of human rights when drafting new laws to fight crime.

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