

Malaysia still needs harsh laws as people "not that developed or educated" – Dr Mahathir
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Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (pic) said the country still needs preventive laws as the people are still "not that developed or educated".

"In this country, we still need that kind of harsh laws. The moment we remove the law, you see what happens," said Dr Mahathir when commenting on the proposed amendments to the Prevention of Crime Act.

He pointed out that the moment such laws are repealed, there is an increase in the number of violent crime cases, as the country witnessed recently.

He had previously voiced his disagreement when the country's preventive laws were abolished.

"The law is for the good of the people," he added after handing out scholarships to students at the Sunway University in Bandar Sunway today.

"If you abuse the law, then you have to pay the price," he said, taking a dig at criminals who were released after the Internal Security Act (ISA) and three Emergency ordinances were repealed in 2012.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had announced the repeal of the laws which allowed for detention without trial on the eve of Malaysia Day in 2011.

However, after a spate of violent crimes recently, the government brought back the archaic Prevention of Crime Act (PCA).

On Wednesday in Parliament, the government tabled amendments to the PCA that upset politicians and civil society who viewed the move as the return of the ISA.

One of the amendments would give the authorities the power to detain hardcore criminals for up to two years without trial.

Similar to the old ISA, the proposed amendments exclude the provision of judicial review, except for procedural measures.

Proposed too was a Prevention of Crime Board to which reports on detainees are to be made instead of to the home minister.

In tabling the amendments, Home Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said it was a "transformation" but in an immediate rebuke, DAP's Karpal Singh said the new contents were "no better" than what it was under the ISA . – September 27, 2013.

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