

'ISA and EO made police lazy'
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KUALA LUMPUR: A former senior police officer has revealed that the men in blue were now lazier after years of being able to detain people without trial under the now repealed Emergency Ordinance 1960 (EO) and Internal Security Act 1948 (ISA), stated NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW) in its report released today.

“The EO and ISA have made the police lazy as they don’t have to gather evidence that needs to be submitted in court,” remarked a former Bukit Aman CID official using the pseudonym Razi M when asked to detail the extent of police abuse in Malaysia.

Razi was one of the 75 persons interviewed by HRW, for their 102-page report, titled “No Answers, No Apology: Police Abuses and Accountability in Malaysia”.

HRW said the detention laws, abolished in 2012, had a “devastating impact” on the investigative abilities of the police force.

“Not having to present evidence to support an allegation in an independent court where it could be challenged by defendants and their lawyers has inhibited the police from investing in and emphasising on modern investigative policing,” it said.

This remark comes against the backdrop of a new Prevention of Crime Act amendment, which was gazetted yesterday and came into force today.

The new amended act allows for the renewable detention without trial for up to two years in the interest of public order and security, if a three-man PCA board finds that the accused has committed two or more serious offences.

Police abuse investigations to be transparent

Meanwhile, HRW said cases of unjustified shootings, deaths in custody and excessive use of force to disperse the public were common within the Malaysian force, which operates without proper police accountability facilities.

HRW said investigations into police abuse cases are conducted primarily by the police themselves, lacks transparency and officers implicated are almost never prosecuted.

“HRW found an apparent pattern of police seeking to justify fatal shootings by asserting that a suspect had a parang or posed a menace to the police during a car chase.

“Yet even when these accounts were plainly contradicted by eye-witness accounts, police rarely investigated their own officers’ claims,” it said.

The global rights group urged the government to among others, setup an independent police oversight agency, make the Inspector-General of Police Standing Order more transparent and to

establish an internal investigation mechanism in the police force.

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