

**Replacing Sedition Act with unity bills could lead to unrest,  
says Dr Mahathir  
Malaysian Insider  
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Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has again warned that repealing the Sedition Act and replacing it with the three unity bills will invite unrest in the country.

The country's longest-serving prime minister said that Malaysians would be free to incite hatred if the Sedition Act is repealed, adding that the new bills would not be able to stop such acts.

"The people will see all kinds of incitement, including incitement to amend the Federal Constitution. It is not impossible for them to incite to do away with the royal institution," he said today in his latest posting on his popular Chedet.cc blog.

Dr Mahathir pointed out that the repealing of the Internal Security Act (ISA) and Banishment Act a few years ago has seen crime rates increasing in the country.

"And although there are some who incite now, it has not crossed the boundaries," he wrote in his post.

Without the Sedition Act, the "extremists" would now be free to criticise the royalty and the monarchy system, he said, which would lead to calls for the institution to be done away with.

"Then, there would not be any laws to arrest them with the ISA and the Sedition Act gone," he said, adding that there were no laws in Malaysia which banned criticism towards the King and the royal

institution, unlike in Thailand.

Although many would be angry with the incitement to eradicate the monarchy system, but those who want to see a Malaysian republic would continue on with their campaign as they would be allowed to do so with the absence of the Sedition Act.

"The possibility is that there would be unrest in the country. This will be the effect of liberalism that they are pushing for now," he added.

The outspoken former prime minister had previously criticised the three new bills – National Harmony Bill, National Unity Bill and National Unity and Integration Commission Bill – saying they would cause inequality among Malaysia's three major ethnic communities.

He said that if passed, the new bills would erase all remaining efforts to balance the economic standing between communities through the New Economic Policy (NEP).

This, he said, is because the new laws would end discrimination based on ethnicity and introduce the principle of meritocracy in giving out government contracts, jobs and university scholarships.

He claimed that the NEP was still necessary because of the different economic achievements of different communities.

The National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), which has been tasked to draft the new bills, had recently revealed details of the three separate bills to replace the Sedition Act, including one to promote harmony and another prescribing mediation as a means to resolve disputes.

This is following the announcement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak in 2012 that the government would repeal the controversial Sedition Act, a preventive law that critics said had been abused to silence dissent.

Datuk Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa, who heads the NUCC's working committee on law and policy, had, however, said that the bills stated that affirmative action, such as the NEP, was not discriminatory.

"And we have also clearly mentioned that the new laws will not interfere with Article 3 of the Federal Constitution, which states that Islam is the official religion of the federation and other sections which talk about the rights of the Malays and the rulers," Mujahid had said, calling on detractors to study the bills first before dismissing them. – June 30, 2014.

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