

Umno Youth sure Najib will heed grassroots on Sedition Act
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BY DIYANA IBRAHIM

The Federal Territory Umno Youth is confident that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak will not repeal the Sedition Act in line with demands from the party's grassroots.

Its chief, Mohd Razlan Muhammad Rafii, said any decision made by the government would be based on feedback from various levels, especially the Umno grassroots.

"I trust the prime minister will make a decision based on the views of the grassroots," he told The Malaysian Insider today.

Umno supreme council member Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim yesterday said that Umno divisions all over the country wanted the government to retain the Sedition Act and for the Internal Security Act to be restored as well.

Shahidan, who is also a minister, said an internal survey revealed that 161 out of the 191 Umno divisions wanted the act to stay, and that this number was set to increase.

Shahidan's statement follows Najib's third affirmation yesterday that the Sedition Act will go, and be replaced by the proposed national harmony laws.

Razlan, however, urged the prime minister to also bring back the Internal Security Act, saying it was needed until there was an act that could ensure peaceful co-existence.

"For now, there is a lot of sedition and hate being expressed on the Internet, and the opposition appears to want to see Sabah part ways with Malaysia.

"The Sedition Act is therefore needed to curb movements like these so that the country can enjoy piece and maintain its sovereignty."

There are no plans for a campaign to rally the Umno grassroots to lobby for the Sedition Act to be maintained, but he said the public could see for themselves the "rise in seditious comments over race and religion".

"It is even worse that the opposition politicians are leading in this area of instilling seditious hate," he said.

Najib first pledged to abolish the Sedition Act in 2012 and again last year, before repeating it for a third time yesterday.

Critics of the act have observed that since Najib's first announcement, an increasing

number of opposition politicians have been charged with sedition.

A law professor was also recently charged under the act for expressing a legal opinion on the 2009 Perak constitutional crisis, while the Malaysiakini news portal and one of its journalists are being investigated for an article which allegedly defamed the police.
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