

Un-Islamic of Najib to renege on promise to repeal Sedition Act, says Azmin
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PKR deputy president Azmin Ali (pic) has hit out at Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak over his failure to repeal the Sedition Act, saying that renegeing on his promise to do so was un-Islamic.

He said contradictory statements by Umno and Barisan Nasional leaders that no decision had been made about abolishing the draconian law had shown that Najib was guilty of "deliberately deceiving the Malaysian people".

"What is their explanation for failing to fulfil their repeated promise? The breaking of a promise by a leader to the people is a serious wrong in Islam," he said in a statement today.

Azmin also called on Najib to act on his repeated promise to repeal the Sedition Act by ordering all the sedition charges pending in court to be dropped.

There has been a slew of charges and investigations initiated against opposition politicians, an academic and a journalist in the last few weeks.

This morning, Najib said Putrajaya will consult Malay groups which have been vocal over its plan to replace the Sedition Act with the National Harmony Act.

Addressing staff of the Prime Minister's Department during its monthly assembly today, Najib said organisations representing the Malay community were among the most vocal when it comes to the colonial-era law, and said the government would study the reasons behind it.

"As a government, we cannot embark on something that will cause disharmony in the country. There must be a rational process whether we want the National Harmony Bill or retain the Sedition Act. If we want to change any Act, the replacement must be better than the existing one.

"As such, we will have discussions with all interest groups, especially those which represent the Malay community, we need to understand why they are so vocal and what are their issues, whether it is a question of Islam, Malay royalty, Article 153, all this we have to understand," he said.

Article 153 of the Federal Constitution spells out the special position of the Malays and Bumiputera.

Yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin had said that the

government had yet to make a decision to repeal the Sedition Act.

"The government has not made any decision yet to abolish the Act, replace it with a new Act or amend the current Act," he was quoted as saying.

Last week, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim told The Malaysian Insider that Putrajaya had never promised to abolish the Sedition Act but only to review it.

Shahidan said Najib's previous remarks that new laws would replace the Sedition Act did not mean the colonial-era law would be abolished.

"The whole nation is shocked and appalled by this (Muhyiddin's) statement which directly contradicts Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib's repeated promises to repeal this draconian law," Azmin said.

"This is a clear admission that Datuk Seri Najib, the government and BN have been blatantly lying to the Malaysian public."

He pointed out that Najib had made a clear promise to repeal the Sedition Act at least four times, with the latest on September 5, following Shahidan's statement.

"Najib first made the promise in July 2012 in the run-up to the 13th general election, in what was a clear ploy to persuade Malaysians to vote for BN by promising to do away with an unpopular and unjust law.

"He then repeated the promise in July 2013 in a BBC interview. Then, as recently as August 30, the PM's department confirmed in a press release that the Act would be repealed.

"Again, on September 5, the PM confirmed that the Act would be repealed.

"Tan Sri Muhyiddin's claim that there is no decision to repeal comes just two days after the PM's latest promise to repeal on September 5. Who is the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib or Tan Sri Muhyiddin?" Azmin asked. – September 8, 2014.

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