

Will NSC Bill save or destroy Malaysia?

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Very soon, even uttering the words above may be deemed a grave danger to “national security”, if the current government has its way.

This week, it passed the controversial National Security Council (NSC) Bill in Parliament.

Proponents of the law say that it is an absolute necessity to protect the nation in times of political turmoil. Critics say that the contentious legislation is a dark day for Malaysia.

The NSC Bill would allow the prime minister (with simple majority support in Parliament) to declare any area of the country a “security area” allowing security forces to impose curfew, use force, conduct arrests, search without warrants and confiscate property, among other things.

All these are justified on the basis of vaguely defined “national security” reasons.

More shockingly, it also gives immunity to the NSC and security forces from prosecution.

Putting it bluntly, former Malaysian ambassador to Canada Dennis Ignatius said that the NSC bill is a prelude to dictatorship, the final step in the “Zimbabweisation” of Malaysia.

“The NSC Bill is more about consolidating power, silencing dissent, stifling the opposition and intimidating the people than anything else. It is a power grab, plain and simple, the end game in Umno’s strategy to acquire absolute and total power,” said Ignatius.

Be afraid. Be very afraid.

This doesn’t mean you shouldn’t have a good weekend (or at least try to)! To start with, here’s a selection of our best news, analyses and commentaries this past week for your reading pleasure:

The changing battlefield of money laundering and terrorism: Anti-money laundering and countering terrorism financing are looking at a changing landscape, as awareness brings more legislation into play on the side of the law. KINIBIZ examines this changing landscape in a special two-part series [here](#).

NSC Bill the final step in the Zimbabweisation of Malaysia: The National Security Bill 2015 tabled in Parliament earlier this week is nothing less than a prelude to dictatorship, the final step in the “Zimbabweisation” of Malaysia. Read why [here](#).

Do we really need KLIA3?: Airport operator Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) is expected to submit a proposal for the airport’s third terminal in the next two to three years. Do we really need KLIA3 or could there be more cost effective options? Our resident cat passionately thinks the latter, as she growls [here](#).

Between US and China, pressure builds for Malaysia: A cold battle for influence has been brewing among two global superpowers China and the US. Malaysia is caught in the middle. Where does this road take us to? Our resident cat ponders the socio-political and economic implications [here](#).

Much ado about vaping: Once a fringe industry, the recent clampdown on vaping by the Health Ministry is lifting the veil on this little known giant and the politics of its control. Read an exclusive Malaysiakini three-part series [here](#).

Can the government not raise toll rates?: The country’s biggest highway concessionaire PLUS is now due to revise their toll rates. Amidst the challenge of escalating cost of living, our resident cat wonders if the government can opt not to raise toll fares. Read about it [here](#).

Is Eagle High still worth it, FGV?: Felda Global Ventures Holdings Bhd continues to hang on hopes of striking a deal for Eagle High Plantations and is planning to renegotiate. Should they just abort the RM2.9 billion purchase instead? Our resident cat certainly thinks so, [here](#).

Does Johor Sultan’s vape ban bypass due process?: The Johor Sultan’s royal decree on the ban of electronic cigarettes or “vapes” splits opinion. Does the monarchy have power to intervene in public health issues or should it be decided purely by legislative due process? Our resident cat weighs in on the raging debate [here](#).

Will Malaysia Airlines-Emirates partnership work?:The first week of December was a busy one for Malaysia Airlines Bhd. It released its first quarterly report and announced an enhanced partnership with Emirates. But a lack of details has left our resident cat wanting more specifics. Find out more [here](#).

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— by **Khairul Khalid, Asst News Editor**

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