

Sosma worse than ISA, Dr Mahathir says after Khairuddin's arrest
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The Security Offences (Special Measures) Act, or Sosma, is worse than the Internal Security Act (ISA) it replaced, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today, following the arrest of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) critic Datuk Khairuddin Abu Hassan.

The former prime minister, a strong proponent of the now-repealed ISA, said Khairuddin could be detained for life under Sosma as the Act did not define the word "sabotage".

"Because of the detention of Khairuddin, I studied this and I found it worse than the ISA. Because if you are accused of sabotage – and sabotage is not defined – you can be jailed for life," Dr Mahathir told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

"So Khairuddin is facing this problem. What he has done of course can be called sabotage because the definition is not given. The government can make a definition, that if you do something like this, it is sabotage, and therefore you should be jailed for life."

Dr Mahathir said critics of the ISA successfully pushed for the Act, which allows detention without trial, to be abolished in 2011, under Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's leadership.

But the scrapping of the ISA only led to it being replaced by an even worse law, said the country's longest-serving prime minister.

"So the people do not like the ISA before, where you get two years and review and all that, and you may even be released before two years. Now you have the possibility of being jailed for the whole life."

Dr Mahathir added that he may very well be arrested under Sosma himself, given the comments he made to the press of late about Najib and the government.

He admitted he was not prepared for such a possibility given his age and health, but added that even "nyanyok people", or people with dementia, could not escape the brunt of the law.

"If I am guilty I will have to go for life imprisonment... I'm not ready, I'm old, not very well, unable to think, nyanyok, you know?"

"But even nyanyok people have no excuse for saying the wrong thing," Dr Mahathir said.

Khairuddin was rearrested last Wednesday under Sosma for investigations into alleged attempts to sabotage the government by lodging reports with foreign

investigators against debt-ridden 1MDB.

The former Batu Kawan Umno vice-chairman was first arrested on September 18, and rearrested on Wednesday under Sosma, a preventive detention law that allows for detention without trial for up to 29 days.

Khairuddin first lodged a police report against the Finance Ministry-owned 1MDB in December last year, and was subsequently removed from his Batu Kawan Umno vice chief position for being declared a bankrupt. He recently lodged reports with authorities in Hong Kong, Switzerland, France and the United Kingdom. – September 30, 2015.

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