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ALL CLEAR ...

Drone picture showing clearing works almost completed after a road leading to Genting Highlands Resort in Pahang was blocked as a result of a landslide on Tuesday. There were no casualties or damage to vehicles. —BERNAMAPIX

Alternative plan

Govt won't ditch Sosma, mulls reducing detention period instead

Reprieve for Seremban Jaya rep

PETALING JAYA: Seremban Jaya state assemblyman P. Gunasekaran, who is facing charges of aiding a terrorist group, has been given a reprieve.

The sessions court in Seremban granted an application by the prosecution to dismiss two charges against him.

The order was made by judge Madiah Harullah after the application was submitted by DPP Aslinda Ahad.

According to the charge sheet, the DAP member is alleged to have been in possession of items related to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a terrorist group active in Sri Lanka until a decade ago. The items were allegedly found in his office and his house on Oct 10.

Gunasekaran, who was not present in court, is being held at the Sungai Buloh prison. He is represented by a panel of four lawyers, led by R. S. N. Rayer.

However, Gunasekaran's party colleague and Gadek assemblyman G. Saminathan, who is facing similar charges related to LTTE, will have to remain in detention.

Deputy public prosecutor Mohd Ishanudin Alias said the High Court does not have the jurisdiction to hear his bail application.

He said the decision should be made by the Federal Court. — Bernama

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KUALA LUMPUR: Rather than repeal the Securities Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma), the government is mulling a reduction of the detention period under the Act from 28 days to 14.

Home Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said this was one of the proposals being considered before it is presented to the Cabinet for approval.

He said he had presented a report on the proposed amendments to the Cabinet three months ago, but was asked to iron out certain issues, including the detention

period, before it could be tabled in Parliament.

"Enforcement agencies such as the police also wanted more time to review cases involving extremism to ensure that they come to the right decision," he said at the Parliament lobby yesterday.

"One proposal is to reduce the detention period to 14 days. But if there is a need, the authorities can seek an extension to 28 days from the courts," he added.

Muhyiddin said the ministry also considered removing a clause that allowed politically-motivated arrests as well as to detain those deemed to be involved in "economic sabotage".

Former Bersih 2.0 chairman Maria Chin Abdullah and lawyer Matthias Chang

were examples of such arrests. We want to avoid a repeat of this, and there are suggestions for this particular clause to be amended or removed altogether."

Muhyiddin said the ministry was seeking input from all stakeholders, including the Bar Council, human rights groups and academicians, before re-tableting the proposed amendments for Cabinet approval.

He said the amendment would be tabled in Parliament in the next session in March 2020.

In its election manifesto, Pakatan Harapan had pledged to repeal Sosma.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Act would be amended as soon as possible.