

Malaysia approves law against fake news

Malaysia's government on Monday pushed a law through Parliament that makes "fake news" punishable with a maximum six-year jail term despite an outcry from critics worried it will be used to stifle dissent before elections.

The law targets foreign as well as local media, and is seen in part as an effort to silence criticism of the scandal surrounding sovereign wealth fund 1MDB that has rocked the administration of Prime Minister Najib Razak. The election is expected within weeks and Mr. Najib is battling to win a third term in office.

After a debate spanning much of Monday and last week on Thursday afternoon, Parliament — which is dominated by the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition — voted in favour of the new law. The law originally proposed a maximum prison sentence of 10 years and fine of 5,00,000 ringgit (\$1,30,000) for publishing what authorities deem to be fake news, but the government lowered the jail term to six years following a storm of criticism.

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com