

We, the people
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Is there any doubt in anybody's mind that we are a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy, with the Agong assuming only some ceremonial roles as explicitly defined by the same constitution and other subsidiary legislation?

In simple language this means that the sultans have only the powers, duties, and responsibilities defined by the constitution and related laws.

This also means since independence and the adoption of the federal constitution, all feudal powers and jurisdiction of the Malay Rulers are technically only there if defined by either the federal or state constitution.

Even conventions are subject to the constitutional principle. Therefore, from merdeka, we were always designed to be a government of the people, by the people and for the people. We were always intended to be a parliamentary democracy, never a feudal one.

The premier calls this same governance system 'a people-first' government, with Umno making this agenda their cornerstone; which means the people are the key in any matter of the public interest. Do the HRHs in Malaysia have any doubts about all of this movement and change?

In fact, the British governance doctrine of 'the King can do no wrong' was modified in Malaysia by none other than the now infamous Dr Mahathir Mohamed. Can someone therefore please upload the speech he made in Parliament about this so that the people can read all these over again! Maybe the HRHs and their advisors have memory lapses that come with aging.

The former PM's actions supported and undergirded by Umno brought the sultans down to earth. These willingly and voluntarily anthropomorphised the sultans, and the fact is the sultans too conceded and cooperated.

Mahathir amended the constitution, mobilising a two-thirds majority in Parliament, and made the sultans accountable to the people for their code of conduct, but especially their misconduct; and thus retained our concept of a democratic space for a people's government of the people and for the people.

Any sultan today can therefore very well do wrong and can be equally liable and brought to court; even to a Special Court but made up of ordinary mortal and human judges nevertheless. While the HRHs remain blue-blooded and have some historical privileges, they are ordinary human beings who will be ultimately be judged by the people and the Almighty.

Therefore, I find it strange that the federal government through the chief secretary - as agent of executive power from the cabinet - is undermining the very constitutional principles and conventions it is sworn to uphold. In my lexicon and in that of Professor Jerry Harvey, they are truly and honestly taking a trip to Abilene. So, please beware and do not say you were not forewarned!

Maybe the attorney-general (AG) must take part of the blame for also setting such a poor example of 'persecution versus prosecution' with questionable conduct on so many related matters!

Can I therefore, maybe be so arrogant as to ask the chief secretary and the cabinet, if 'we the people' should again be mobilised to sign a petition to have this issue referred to the courts and relevant parties charged with mala fide disrespect for the constitution and the related unwritten covenants? Our rule of law principle remains paramount under the constitution, I think!

After all I do believe that we, the people, are the third force of influence and power! Maybe we can even be allowed to bring in Queen's Counsel to argue the case-history of our Westminster model of democracy, just in case these 'developing world natives' have not yet learned the lesson about independence and democracy within the context of merdeka.

Maybe also, that is why we are condemned to remain a third world nation! It is our 'underdeveloped' civic culture and tradition that make us not yet a developed nation; never the physical infrastructure that we often boast of. It is our culture, stupid!

Issues at hand

How then can the federal government appoint the Selangor state secretary without the approval of the administrative head of the state or menteri besar; as explicitly defined by the state constitution?

The sultan is only the ceremonial head premised upon our constitution! Does the state legal advisor not know this, or is AG the 'hidden hand' again?

How then can the mohamed khusrin munawi starts work as selangor secretary 030111state secretary take office on Thursday if he is not approved by the state exco and sworn in by the MB? Does he really have to swear before the sultan now or does the MB, elected and chosen by the people, bow to the feudal head of historicity?

I know that the MB or chief minister are always sworn in before the head of a state, but that is provided for especially in the case of a hung election and which evokes the role of the HRH! But, since when has the top civil servant been sworn in before a sultan, unless in the days of the Federation of Malaya, when tribal chiefs held sway in their little kingdoms?

And who then will give the state secretary his key to his office? Do we now need the HRH or his palace guards to do also do that or, for that matter, a Jakim official? To whom then does the state secretary report for work - the sultan?

If the state secretary is also the ex-officio secretary to the state executive council, how then does he do his work if the exco members have no confidence in him? Does the financial officer and the chief land officer than also report only to the sultan? Should we not then rename all this a 'feudal governance' system? Is this our 'development and progress' towards a high-income nation? At what cost and to whom?

Does that also mean from now in Selangor, the HRH becomes the chief executive officer of the state?

Can he then also please declare his assets and seek to become accountable to the people, but reporting through the federal government and the cabinet? Can he also live his life

under public scrutiny? Can he also get down from his throne more often and come on the ground to walk about more to make sure our drains are cleaned all over Petaling Jaya? And, please do not forget the Kampung Medan flats!

I am sure the HRHs know their rights, duties and the appropriate constitutional protocol within a parliamentary democracy. We will always remain a constitutional monarchy, I pray! If not, there is a severe and serious danger that we might slowly but surely revert to the days of old, when the King alone knew all and therefore ruled by edict from the throne.

The rest of us would then be reduced to mere mortals who are to learn to serve that King, and then choose to die, as commanded by the now very human lord! God forbid!

A feudalistic mindset in Malaysia is an older attitude that makes and treats some people like the feudal kings beyond the rule of law, and others like paupers or beggars, often disregarding the very dignity God has given to all human beings.

I only want to remind the Malay Rulers that more than half of all their subjects are Muslims and they run the risk of losing their legitimacy under a more Islamic worldview, if their conduct does not measure up to the best principles of interpreting Islamic governance within the 21st century context. Shame to the blind idiocrats!

May God bless Malaysia!

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