

HRP, Hindraf still denied political freedom
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COMMENT While we welcome the landmark Court of Appeal decision declaring Section 15(5)(a) of the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971, which restricts students from expressing support for or opposing any political party, as unconstitutional, we question why both the Malaysian courts and the Umno home minister have denied the legal registration of the Human Rights Party (HRP) and Hindraf.

Justice Hishamuddin went on to hold that "Section 15(5)(a) was not only counter-productive but repressive in nature".

Our website search on the Registrar of Societies (in March 2011 and now removed) revealed that 46,870 NGOs and 31 political parties have been registered. In fact, MMSP and Kita were, respectively, registered within two weeks and one month of their applications.

However, in contrast, both Hindraf and HRP have been singled out for "ostracisation" and refused legal registration as an NGO and political party, respectively, for 12 long years since 2000 by no less than the home minister.

On a similar note, why are HRP and Hindraf not allowed to co-exist alongside the other 31 political parties and 46,870 NGOs?

To add insult to injury, the High Court in Kuala Lumpur had, on June 30 this year, denied the legal registration of HRP as a political party and again, on Aug 16 this year, it denied the registration of Hindraf as an NGO.

1Malaysia, but no democracy for Hindraf, HRP

And why is this so? Because only Hindraf and HRP will speak up on the truth of the extent and magnitude of the Umno government's state-sponsored, and to a lesser extent the private sector's, marginalisation and racial discrimination that target the vulnerable Indian poor in particular?

When even university students are rightly allowed by the Court of Appeal to participate in political activities, why not HRP and Hindraf?

Especially so when Justice Datuk Mohd Hishamuddin Mohd Yunus held that "universities should be the breeding ground of reformers and thinkers, and not institutions to produce students trained as robots. Clearly, the provision is not only counter-productive but repressive in nature. It is fundamental to the existence of democracy and the respect of human dignity".

But in 1Malaysia, why aren't HRP and Hindraf allowed to similarly champion the "democracy and human dignity" of the "badly bruised and battered-up" but least attention-drawing Indian poor, as is documented and reported on a day-to-day basis in www.humanrightspartymalaysia.com? Because Umno still wants to maintain and retain them as robots and "safe deposit BN voters"?

It is plain and obvious that the Umno government is taking advantage of the political and economic segregation of the Indian poor. This is done by socially engineering the "politically paralysed Indian electorate", made possible by the Umno government's gerrymandering and denying Indians sufficient parliamentary and state seats, coupled with the economically disadvantaged Indian poor.

If, and only if, the top leadership of the pseudo multiracial Pakatan Rakyat had also seriously championed the cause of the Indian poor on a needs basis, Hindraf and HRP would not have come into existence in

the first place.

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