

ISA affects Malaysians psychologically
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The majority of Malaysian wish to see the day when the Internal Security Act would be abolished and thrown into the dustbins of history for good. However, there are those who still want a milder version of this draconian law for they believe it would help maintain peace and order.

It is important to note that the ISA has not helped build a unified true Malaysian society despite its existence for more than five decades. What the ISA has done is to inflict fear in our society, cause division among the rakyat, strengthened the hands of those in power and nothing more. Every Malaysian is "psychologically arrested" and this is the only product of the ISA.

My cousin who is 12 told me recently that I have to be careful because the police might arrest me under the ISA. What does a 12-year-old kid know about the ISA and its impact on Malaysian society? This goes to prove beyond doubt that even children of that age are living in fear of the ISA.

I salute the six ministers for breaking ranks with the government and speaking out against the ISA arrest of MP Teresa Kok, blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin and reporter Tan Hoon Cheng. I hope that they will join forces with right thinking people to demand for the repeal of this draconian law that violates fundamental human, constitutional and legal rights of the rakyat.

Malaysia is one of the signatories of the Asean Charter that was signed by our prime minister on the 20th of November 2007 in Singapore. Article 1 of this charter explicitly states that the member states of Asean should strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and promote and protect human and fundamental freedoms, with regard to the rights and responsibilities of the member states of Asean.

Article 2 (i) states that member states shall respect fundamental freedoms, the promotion and protection of human rights, and the promotion of social justice and Article 2(j) states that the United Nations Charter and international law, including international humanitarian law, is subscribed to by Asean members states.

It is a crying shame that Malaysia being a signatory of this recent international charter still wants to use draconian laws like the ISA to detain the rakyat without any logic or justification.

I hope other ministers, members of parliament, senators and state assemblymen from both sides of the house will join forces with civil society organisations and right thinking rakyat to demand for the repeal of this draconian law and demolish the Kamunting detention center.

We need to act urgently, failing which the whole nation will continuously live in fear of the ISA like my little cousin.

