

## **Najib Should Present A Blueprint Of How He Proposes To Make Malaysia The 'Best Democracy In The World'.**

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Malaysians should take seriously what the Prime Minister, Najib Razak said in Pekan yesterday about making Malaysia the "best democracy in the world" and put him to the test.

At present, Malaysia is among the "worst democracy in the world" where citizens could be arrested for wearing yellow T-shirts and attract the full might of the law for supporting a peaceful rally in pursuit of a perfectly legitimate and democratic campaign for free and fair elections, including mass arrests and the firing of teargas and chemically-laced water cannons at unarmed and defenceless Malaysians.

A government seriously committed to the goal of becoming the "best democracy in the world" would not have arbitrarily and undemocratically banned Bersih 2.0 as an illegal organisation but would have engaged with all political parties and the civil society as to how Malaysia can transform itself from a "flawed democracy" into a "full-fledged democracy".

This is why I said yesterday that the Barisan Nasional Government is not qualified to talk about wanting to be the "best democracy in the world" when it has not revoked its unjustified ban on Bersih 2.0 declaring it as an illegal organisation and dropped all charges against those arrested in connection with the Bersih 2.0 campaign.

For this reason, I welcome the dropping of the charges against the 30 activists of Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM), including the six who were detained earlier under the Emergency Ordinance (EO), in connection with their support of the July 9 Bersih 2.0 rally.

The question next is when the unreasonable and undemocratic ban on Bersih 2.0 will be revoked?

Najib's claim that the government is able to make the "historic decision" to repeal the Internal Security Act (ISA) and review several other laws because the people had become more educated who appreciated a mature democracy and a legal system that could safeguard basic human rights has only begged the question about the independence, professionalism and integrity of the judiciary in the country.

Malaysia's judiciary has a long way to go to recover its judicial professionalism, independence and integrity which it enjoyed before the series of executive assaults on the judiciary for over two decades – beginning with the 1988 judicial crisis resulting in the sacking of the Lord President, Salleh Abas and two Supreme Court judges.

Malaysia cannot be said to be on the path to become the "best democracy in the world" without a total overhaul of undemocratic laws – including repressive legislation like the Universities and Universities Colleges Act, Official Secrets Act and Sedition Act - and key institutions in the country as ensuring an independent, professional and incorruptible judiciary, Attorney-General's Chambers, Police, Civil Service, Election Commission, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency, etc.

Najib should present a full blueprint of how he proposes to make Malaysia the "best democracy in the world" with democratic laws and truly independent institutions when Parliament reconvenes on October 3.

This will be an acid test whether he is serious about the repeal of the ISA and other draconian laws to make Malaysia the "best democracy in the world".