

Is Rahim Noor's Equation Of Human Rights Movements To Communism An Attempt To Derail PM's 'Political Transformation Programme'?

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It comes as a complete shock that one of the country's former Inspector General of Police (IGP) had the nerve to "liken the rise of the human rights movement in Malaysia to communism".

Disgraced Rahim Noor who gave Anwar Ibrahim the infamous "black eye", had referred to the human rights movement as a new "religion". He warned that civil liberties activists saw the US and UK as their spiritual home and drew parallels to how the Comintern had engineered the global spread of communism from its Moscow base.

If human rights can be akin to communism, then surely what Tan Sri Rahim Noor is attempting to do during his speech at the 2nd Perkasa General Assembly is to seed and grow the fascism movement in Malaysia. "Fascism" is described in the Oxford English dictionary to include "a belief in the supremacy of one national or ethnic group, a contempt for democracy, an insistence on obedience to a powerful leader, and a strong demagogic approach".

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 had emphasized among other things, the fact that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights", that "all are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law", that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile" and that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage".

Rahim Noor's speech and reception at the right-wing Perkasa assembly marks the second time the movement is attempting to derail "reforms" put forth by the Prime Minister, since the latter's inauguration in 2009.

In the first instance, Perkasa was able to force the Prime Minister to reverse his landmark "New Economic Model" (NEM) which sought to reform the country's race-based affirmative action system. The NEM when launched in March 2010, had called for an "affirmative action approach based on "transparent and market-friendly affirmative action programmes", which "will mean greater support for the Bumiputera, a greater support based on needs, not race". It is as opposed to the previous New Economic Policy (NEP) of "imposing conditions to meet specific quotas or targets".

However, within 3 months from the launch of the NEP, the affirmative action policy reform was reversed when the 10th Malaysia Plan re-incorporated the race-based agenda and quota system. Even at the earlier Malay Consultative Council (MPM) lead by Perkasa in May 2010, the Prime Minister had already referred to the NEM as a only a "trial balloon", a clear reversal from the bold reforms announced.

The latest attacks against the human rights movement deemed as subversive is clearly an attempt to reverse Najib's capitulation to civil society movements such as Bersih. Such movements have recently led to the setup of a Parliamentary Select Committee for Electoral Reforms as well as the proposed abolishment and amendment of several draconian such as the Internal Security Act (ISA) and the

Printing, Presses and Publications Act (PPPA). These measures are opposed by Perkasa, comprising of many hardliners within UMNO.

Najib Razak must immediately put a stop to this fascism movement and openly condemn the former IGP and Perkasa's attempt to allude the human rights movement to communism. He must also openly declare his full support for the human rights objectives, as enshrined in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, if he is sincere about his "political transformation programme".

Otherwise, the latest hype surrounding the "political transformation programme" will just become a "trial balloon" like the NEM, where the promised reforms will be severely curtailed or worse, equally draconian laws will be adopted to replace existing ones such as the ISA.

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