

**Lawyers For Liberty Condemns Irresponsible Statement On Human Rights By Rahim Noor And Mahathir**  
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**By Murnie Hidayah**

Lawyers for Liberty, as an organization that stands for human rights is appalled by recent statements made by former PM Mahathir and former IGP Rahim Noor. It seems that these well-known figures are getting away with making absurd and irresponsible statements such as likening the human rights struggle to communism.

Indeed it comes as no surprise that Rahim Noor – who was once the country's highest police officer would make such remarks. During his time in office, Rahim Noor was guilty of widespread human rights abuses carried out by his police force under his directions, particularly during the reformasi period. Nobody in their right mind can fathom his poor analysis in trying to dismiss human rights as a communism-like wave. However, a key prominent figure, former Prime Minister Mahathir has joined the fray in support of Rahim Noor, who has been heavily criticised for his outrageous remarks.

Moreover, Mahathir himself was another blatant violator of human rights during his tenure as PM. One clear example is the mass arrests during Ops Lalang and police brutality during the early years of Reformasi.

We should also not forget that it was under Mahathir's orders to destroy Anwar Ibrahim and the rakyat's reformasi movement that Rahim Noor beat Anwar close to death on the night of 20 September 1998. Mahathir immediately covered up Rahim's crime by suggesting Anwar had beaten himself up just to get sympathy. Rahim later confessed to his crime and was convicted.

The attitude of BN governments since independence is that Human Rights advocates and activists are mere pests who should be disregarded and persecuted. In taking this position they are absolutely wrong and failing in their duty to the Rakyat.

Human rights are an important pillar for the people to ensure that the State exercises full and frank disclosure in the affairs of the state. In any truly democratic state, human rights advocates ought to be hailed as the voice of the people in guaranteeing the people's freedoms and the accountability of the State.

In pursuit of true democracy, one should ensure the human rights of the people are not breached. Recognizing this many organization and Unions of sovereign states claim to subscribe to human rights standards but fail to do so in reality. Malaysia being a member of OIC should not forget that even OIC has its own charter on Declaration of Human Rights. Malaysia is also part of the Human Rights Council under the United Nations - such remarks made by Rahim Noor, Mahathir and other anti Human Rights figures is a major embarrassment to our nation.

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