

(Videos embedded below)

This is not the first constitutional crisis in which the rights of the Rulers has been touched upon. Today's crisis in Perak is about the legitimacy of the process by which a new state government has been formed in Perak. It's not about the status of the Rulers. In comparison, the constitutional crisis of 1993 arose from an ugly confrontation between Umno and the Rulers over a question that had direct and profound implications on their sovereignty and that of the Yang Dipertuan Agong. For good reason, the Head of State in most countries may not be prosecuted in an ordinary court of law. In 1993, the government campaigned to remove this immunity through amendments to the Constitution.

I opposed these amendments.

In the event, Rulers and Parliament were railroaded by the government of the day and the amendments passed. These are the very same amendments which today make it legal for a Ruler to be prosecuted. Mr Karpal Singh, though I disagree with him, was acting well within rights that an Umno-led government enacted in 1993 when he earlier proposed to sue DYMM the Sultan of Perak.

Let's reflect on this irony. Does Umno serve the Rulers more genuinely by upholding and protecting the Constitution which guarantees their status, or by histrionic displays tuned for the coming Umno elections?

This bears upon the question of the kind of leaders, and the kind of party, we want. Do we want to be led by those who can understand and address the foundational issues facing our society today, and shall we have leaders capable of forging "mutual consent by debate and discussion, inquiries and elections" or shall we again be landed with those whose main talent is to strike poses that people outside a small, insecure circle in Umno, and particularly Malaysia's internet generation, find ridiculous?

1993

Written by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah
Monday, 16 February 2009 00:00 -

Was greater harm done to the sovereignty of the Rulers in 1993 through Parliament or a week ago on the streets of Perak?

And is today's Umno, with its inconsistent adherence to the rule of law, its inconstant respect for the key institutions of our country, a credible or effective defender of the Rulers and of the laws upholding this institution?

Or do we actually harm what we claim to protect?

Below is a video recording in two parts of the speech I made in Parliament in 1993 opposing the amendments to the Constitution.

I stand by my argument.

{youtube}asNTbvIK7Eo|600|450|0{/youtube}

{youtube}SRMDrtn6898|600|450|0{/youtube}

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