

Cascading Illegality

Written by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah

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The BN's takeover of Perak has set off a chain-reaction of illegality which has left Perak quite possibly without a legitimate government. One of our most prosperous states has been reduced to a failed state.

One lie leads to many lies. Each bad action leads to a cascade of follies. Particularly when the lie or violation concerns something very basic. This is a principle we teach our children. It is a simple but universal truth now being demonstrated in Perak.

With each violation the sense of decency and restraint and the habits that bind us to the Constitution are loosened. The confidence in the rule of law that makes civilized life possible is diminished.

Laws are invisible things. They exist only when they are understood and observed. When the government of the day ignores foundational principles such as the separation of powers, the Constitution becomes a dead piece of paper. But the Constitution is not just any law. It is the set of laws that founds our nation, defines its basic principles, guarantees our individual rights and prescribes the structures, duties, and powers which make a national community possible. It is the foundation and source of the legal authority underlying the existence of Malaysia.

Those who so blithely ignore the Constitution for political ends are quite literally wrecking the foundations of this country to further their own interests.

This must stop.

The constitutional situation in Perak gets murkier by the day, with egos and reputations entrenched in hopeless positions. There is a simple and graceful way to clarify the situation definitively: return to the sole source of legitimate government, the will of the people as expressed through free and fair elections. Barisan might wish to show some magnanimity and confidence in calling for this.