

Speech by M.Kula Segaran MP for Ipoh Barat and DAP National Vice Chairman on the 2005 Budget in the Dewan Rakyat on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2004.

### **RM1 Billion special fund need to be set up to help the marginalised Indians community**

In the recent budget presented by the government much has been promised to uplift the poor and the rural lot. But strikingly absent in the announcement in the budget presented was any form of policies or allocation to help the Malaysian Indians. The Indians form about less than 10% of the population. On record the Indians economic slice is presently just 1.5%. The government has promised to enhance the economic cake to 3% within 2010. Is this achievable? Many believe that with absence of any special economic and or empowerment plans to help the Indian community to achieve the targeted 3% is just a dream which cannot be realized in many years to come. It is said that presently Indians are said to have 1) highest drop out rate in schools 2) Highest unemployment rate 3) highest illiteracy rate 4) highest alcoholic rate 5) highest criminal activity 6) highest numbers of squatters etc, etc. These disastrous and bleak situation presently been faced by the Indian community will continue unless the government takes pro active policies to help this community. The marginalised Indians community needs help from the government urgently. Even the Deputy UMNO Youth President En. Khairi in a TV interview yesterday mentions that the Indians are very marginalized and need help. But help is not forth coming. I suggest the government immediately sets up special revolving fund of RM1 billion to assist the Indians. This special fund should be channeled only for the economic and social development of the marginalised Indians. A select committee on the issue of marginalization of the Indians needs to be established to find the cause and measures to be taken to address the problems faced by the community.

### **Why Petronas income and Expenditure is kept a secret?**

Petronas a fully government controlled company has the sole right over the wealth of oil and gas production and reserve in the country. It is reported that the Income of Petronas is in billions of ringgit every year. Although the income of Petronas belongs to Malaysians we are all kept in the dark as regards the real income and how are these monies dispersed. From reliable sources it is learnt that Petronas has stashed billions overseas. Presently even Parliament does not have a clue as to the income and expenditure of Petronas. In the present climate of transparency and accountability it is only logical that Petronas incomes must come within the preview of Parliament. When will this ever happen?

## **Medan Kidd Bus terminal in Ipoh been forced to cease operations due to certain hidden agenda**

The bus terminal at Medan Kid has been operating without any inconvenience to the Ipoh people. In fact the government also has not asked to maintain this bus terminal thus a win-win situation to all. But this welcomed arrangement is now under severe pressure in that there are certain well connected people who want this bus station be moved to Medan Gopeng. The Medan Kidd serves more than 300 hundred thousand people who live within this vicinity of Medan Kidd.

The local community, Bus operators, Taxi operators, food stall operators and the business community in the old town will be severely affected in all respects if Medan Kidd Bus terminal is forcibly moved to Medan Gopeng. As it is Ipoh Old town is quiet since the demise of the tin industry. The worry among the people is that if the move take place Old town will become a ghost town.

The proposed Medan Gopeng bus terminal is away from the city center. Medan Kid is ideally placed to serve the people of Ipoh. Among its advantages are 1) The City center bus station is just opposite Medan Kid which is of walking distance. Passengers are picked and drop at the city bus station from all major towns of Ipoh. 2)The Central Post Office main government buildings and Railway station are located near Medan Kid 3) The largest Malay Kampong in the country GUGUSAN MANJOI which was declared open by the Prime Minister recently is within quick reach of Medan Kid 4) Conveniently Buses could reach the North South Highway.

On 10 May 2004, Lembaga Pelisinaan Kenderaan (LPKP) ordered all bus operating from Medan Kidd to move immediately to Medan Gopeng. Why was this decision taken without consultation with those who would be affected with this demand? The proposed Medan Gopeng bus terminal was built as a Cultural and Information center by the State Economic Corporation (SEC). But although millions were spent on the Medan Gopeng cultural and info centers it was a failed project from the start. This site was away from City Center and the Center could not attract the desired business and people to be places there. Thus a grandeur idea was imitated wherein the Medan Kidd bus operators move to this Center might save the center and eventually SEC. But the views, convenience, feelings of passengers using Medan Kidd were disregarded.

Recently the Committee representing the Medan Kidd parties have presented a memorandum at the PM's office and Mr. Teoh Ah Chuah on behalf of the PM received this memorandum on behalf of the PM.

## **The building of RM40million Marina Project at Pulau Timion has a direct effect on the Coral Reefs**

## ***International Conventions***

Malaysia is a signatory to the UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The marina project will threaten the survival of more than 200 endangered giant clams, 300-year-old corals including 4m-high boulder corals and other marine life within the area.

## ***Overdevelopment***

Many of our island paradises such as Langkawi, Pangkor, Redang, Perhentian, Tioman and the Johor islands have borne the brunt of overdevelopment.

The run-off in the construction of airstrips, golf courses and resorts have contributed to the amount of particles in the water, thus reducing visibility and causing the death of coral reefs.

Fishermen complain of lower catches.

Immediate damage control is required if we are to save these islands from destruction and if we are to attract tourists to our country.

Proper sewerage treatment and proper disposal of rubbish is of immediate priority.

Artificial reefs must be introduced in areas to encourage reef growth.

Existing construction has to abide by marine park development guidelines and with effective run-off and siltation control. A minimum of 30% silanation is required for coral reefs to survive and grow.

Violators of marine park guidelines must be punished as a deterrent to others. A good example is those who had illegally dredged the coral reef to build a jetty on Pulau Redang. In the early 1990s, the Department of Fisheries embarked on a publicity blitz to promote Redang. But there were no checks and balances, so tourists flocked to the islands by the thousands and tourism development surged ahead while management measures lagged behind. They left a legacy of broken corals. Litter is a big problem on land and in the sea. The quality of water off Redang has deteriorated. Traces of E-coli (found in sewage) have been detected in the water plus pollutants like oil and grease.

We are slaughtering the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob stated that a comprehensive master plan for the island would be drafted, indicating that measures had been taken to protect the residents' interests.

On 23 August 02 the Tioman Development Authority (TDA) mentioned that they need at least RM200 million to develop the island's infrastructure to prepare for its duty-free status.

TDA general manager Hashim Mat Tahir said the new infrastructure would include construction of a road connecting the kampungs in Salang, Air Batang, Tekek, Paya, Genting and Mukut.

Hashim said the remainder of the allocation would be used to build commercial buildings, government administration buildings, and other infrastructure.

On a visit to the Island then PM Datuk Dr. Mahathir suggested the expansion of the present airport and building a marina to attract more yacht owners. Now he says that development on Timion must be environmentally friendly!

He said the airport runway needed to be lengthen to allow bigger aircraft to land and suggested a rock barrier to be constructed for the marina as a safe haven during the monsoon season.

There was also a proposal to reclaim the area around the island but it was rejected as, according to Rompin MP Datuk Dr Jamaluddin Jarjis, it would affect the marine life and corals. So land reclamation would affect corals but building a marina would not?

On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2004 Tun Dr. Mahathir the TDA advisor said that any development in Timon must not spoil the beauty and the environment and he said

"We are still debating whether the island should have a new airport, because of the constraints involved. It also has water supply problems. The island cannot be compared to Langkawi, which has a lot of open land on the coastal areas. Tioman has a lot of hilly areas and any development made should be carried out to highlight the tourism potential of the island.

He also further said that Tioman should have fewer facilities so that only serious tourists can come and enjoy the natural beauty of the Island.

On 5th September 2004 the MB of Pahang said it was up to the people to decide if they wanted development for the island or to leave it as it was. How untrue this statement by the MB. Since when it was up to the people to decide if they wanted the project. Many other projects have been carried out without consulting the local community or relevant interest group/NGOs.

“The projects will be carried out in consultation with professionals. If the projects are found to be unsuitable as alleged, then they will not be carried out. We will only implement development projects that can benefit people.”

We suggest that the EIA report be transparent. Carry out the EIA at Tioman and not from the consultant’s office in Kuala Lumpur.”

According to Dr Lee Grismer, a US-based evolutionary biologist, unsustainable development of Tioman’s marine park will have an adverse effect on the island’s unique plant and animal life. Dr Grismer, who has spent four years studying the amphibians and reptiles of the Seribuat Archipelago (which covers 64 islands, including Tioman), said this island was home to 13 species of reptiles and amphibians that could only be found here. He said the island had one of the highest diversity of reptiles and amphibians in Asia.

“If anything happens to one of the habitat, the other would suffer the same fate,” he said.

It is said that the natural beauty of P.Tioman is being gradually eroded in the name of development.

The proposed marina at Kg.Tekek and other projects in the future will have a profound effect on the serene and clean environment and this in turn will turn tourist away.

In view of too much development time has come for the government to freeze future development.