

Central Executive Committee Report Presented in Party National Conference 2014

GENERAL

1. The National Conference 2014 is held at One City, USJ 25, Subang Jaya, on the 14th December 2014, following the 16th National Congress on 15th and 16th December 2012 in Penang and the re-balloting for the existing Central Executive Committee (CEC) on 29th September 2013 in Petaling Jaya.
2. The theme for this Conference is “Berat sama dipikul, ringan sama dijinjing.” This is an old Malay saying to reflect the DAP’s commitment to the solidarity of all Malaysians towards unity, tolerance, social justice and equal opportunities for all.

STATE OF THE PARTY

3. The DAP vs ROS

Since the electoral success of 2008, the UMNO-controlled Barisan Nasional has been attacking the DAP day and night. The reason is simple: if Malaysians, especially the Malays can accept the DAP or non-racial politics, it will spell the end of racial politics. UMNO-BN’s relentless hostile actions even amounted to attempts by the Registrar of Societies (ROS) to ban DAP on the eve of the 13th General Election in 2013. We refused to back down and we have won the first round.

Then the ROS came charging at us. And again, a great legal and political battle was won, when the ROS was forced to concede in court after being sued by DAP, that ROS’s directive that the party’s rightful central executive committee, elected on the 29th September 2013 ought not to make decisions for the DAP as it was not recognized, was not legally binding.

Although DAP was constrained to agree to the ROS’s earlier demand of conducting fresh party elections, at risk of being de-registered, and we did hold this reelection but under protest, we worked in solidarity and proved that we will never be defeated. Although the threats are there, we will continue with our struggle. We have faith in each and every one of the Party members will do his/her best to defend our rights to exist.

4. The loss of our beloved leaders

It is with deepest regret and sadness that we mourn the passing of our party stalwarts who had given us most of their life to build a new Malaysia based on true democracy, justice and equal opportunity. We bid them farewell and we extend our condolences to their respective family members.

- a. Sdr Karpal Singh

Our Party Chairman Sdr Karpal Singh, who has been the voice of conscience to our nation, tragically left us on the 17th April 2014. Yet even until his final

moments, he was fighting the fight that many of us admired and followed him for as a fearless leader. In his sacrificial move of resigning as party chairperson on the 29th March 2014, to remove all possibilities of our party being incarcerated by UMNO-BN's persecutions, we saw the true spirit of Karpal and unparalleled leadership in the tiger that he was. Sdr. Tan Kok Wai assumed the position of acting National Chairman.

b. Sdr Seah Leong Peng

Our three-term state assembly veteran and first term Parliamentarian, Sdr Seah Leong Peng's departure on 1st May spelt another painful bereavement for the party. He was a true testament to the power of dedication and unfettered hard work in building a strong grassroots support.

c. Sdr Wong Ho Leng

The party was plunged into further sorrow and despair, when on the 21st June, the then Chairman of DAP Sarawak Sdr Wong Ho Leng, passed away after a long battle with illness. Such was the admiration he held among friends and political opponents, that unreservedly positive tributes and condolences poured in from both sides of the political divide. Sdr Ho Leng's legacy will remain strong in the ever growing influence and current leadership of DAP Sarawak that he has built over the years.

MAJOR POLITICAL EVENTS

5. The 13th General Election

Despite the overwhelming advantage of money, machinery and media enjoyed by the BN, Pakatan still won an additional 7 parliament seats, from 82 in 2008 to 89 in 2013 with 52 percent of popular vote. Pakatan won an additional 32 state seats; with the DAP convincingly gaining 22 seats, PKR 8 and PAS 2.

The DAP recorded its best performance in history by winning 38 parliamentary and 107 state seats. We also have elected representatives from all races – Malays, Chinese, Indians, and our first Kadazandusun wakil rakyat. We are proud to have our first female Indian MP and Assemblyperson.

The DAP also has the averagely youngest delegation of elected representatives among all parties. Of the current 37 MPs from the DAP, four were born after 1980; of the current 104 state assemblymen, 21 were born after 1980. Five out of 13 Johor DAP State Assemblypersons were born after 1980. The DAP also has the highest proportion of women among candidates. These are our strengths that we must continue to build upon in order to be the choice party of all Malaysians. We walk the talk.

6. The Bukit Gelugor and Teluk Intan by-elections

The Bukit Gelugor Parliamentary seat was vacant because of Sdr Karpal's departure. With 89% of the electorate granting DAP a resounding victory, the party welcomes Sdr Ramkarpal Singh into the frontlines of Malaysian politics. The Teluk Intan Parliamentary seat was vacant because of Sdr Seah Leong Peng's departure. Despite the

31st May defeat of the Teluk Intan parliamentary by election by a mere 238 votes, party novice Sdr Dyana Sofya Mohd Daud has risen to the expectations, challenges and demands in the quest to realise the dream of a Malaysian Malaysia.

7. Selangor – from Kajang Move to a new Selangor Menteri Besar

The “Kajang move” has been a matter of huge contention both within the public sphere as well as within the party. The DAP was locked in a political scuffle to determine the new Menteri Besar to replace the problematic Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim of PKR. Such an episode has tainted Pakatan Rakyat, including the antics of PAS top leadership in handling the issue, as it had given the impression to the public that there was no unity among the coalition. The outcome of the aforementioned negativities did however manage to resolve political impasse. The CEC and the leadership of the Selangor DAP will continue to play its role of a strong partner in democracy.

8. Sedition charges against DAP & Pakatan Rakyat Leaders

Sdr Teresa Kok, Sdr R S N Rayer, Sdr Karpal Singh; these are our leaders and comrades who are facing the full wrath of the Sedition Act 1948. Sdr Khalid Samad, Sdr N Surendran, Sdr Tian Chua are also victims of this cruel colonial law, together with civil society leaders and activists such as Prof Azmi Sharom, Ms Susan Loone, Safwan Anang, Abu Bakar Baikalani Abu Hassan, Ustaz Wan Ji Wan Hussein and many more. It also exposed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak as the leader whose words can never be trusted again as he had promised to abolish the draconian law, and yet reneged on his own words, merely to please the extremist faction of UMNO during the recent UMNO general assembly.

9. The case of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

The two sham and shameful sodomy trials perpetrated by UMNO-BN to destroy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and the reform agenda have come to a head, with all of us waiting for the Federal Court’s decision. DAP stands unreservedly in full solidarity and will give all support necessary and possible to DSAI, his family and all involved should the worst case prevails.

THE BIG PICTURE

10. The DAP is and will always be a non-ethnic multiracial party whose sole aim is to democratise Malaysia based on freedom, social justice and equal opportunities for all. It is never a party that fights only for a particular race or religion. It is the party for all.

With such a noble aim. UMNO-BN has always been uneasy with the DAP’s existence. With the victory of 2008 and again in 2013, the UMNO propaganda machine has upped the ante to destroy DAP’s credibility by spreading lies, deception and malicious rumours, especially among the Malays. UMNO’s greatest fear is that Malays may one day reject racial politics, and without the Malay support, it will be the end of UMNO.

The DAP since 1966 has been trying very hard to bring in members from all races. But the aforementioned dirty strategies and tactics by UMNO and the state agencies made it

difficult for our Party to reach out to the Bumiputera, especially the Malays. Yet the DAP never gives up and keep finding ways to reach out to all Malaysians.

The theme for the 2014 National Conference – “Berat sama dipikul, ringan sama dijinjing” – is DAP’s response to the challenges of our time. With a looming economic slowdown, if not a crisis as yet, UMNO’s hate machine will continue to attack the DAP and Pakatan Rakyat.

Inequality in Malaysia is one of the worst in Asia, as a result of policies of the ruling UMNO-BN for nearly past six decades. However inequality is not racial and shouldn’t be treated racially. We must never make the mistake of looking at things racially; that’s the game of UMNO-BN. In a slowdown and difficult financial moments ahead, the DAP must offer our message of hope, as well as explaining to the nation that we have more than enough for the need of all, but not the greed of the UMNO-linked selected few.

Not only that DAP is at the forefront of calling for a moderate Malaysia, what is crucial for the years ahead is to take cognizance of the primacy of economic debate. We must provide an economic vision to convince all that Malaysia can be a great economy, and a great nation, with a new government. And a great economy means virtuous cycle of higher wages, better skills and productivity gains; with no corruption, no monopolies or oligopolies, as well as one that the government leads with vision, regulates without fear or favour, and provides great public services like education, health, public transport and decent housing that move the nation forward.

To move the nation forward, we must also address geographical divide to provide greater opportunities for Sabah, Sarawak and semi-urban areas. A nation in solidarity with its people sharing a destiny is our response to racism, religious extremism, hatred and divisiveness.

NEW INITIATIVES

11. Rokatkini.com and The Rocket – Edisi Bahasa Malaysia

In May 2011, the DAP launched its first Bahasa Malaysia news website Rokatkini.com. The purpose is to reach out to Bahasa-speaking Malaysians, especially the Malays. With a skeleton crew of 5 people, Rokatkini manages to spread party news and information in the cyberworld. The Rokatkini staff also manage the now-regular monthly printed publication of the Rocket – Edisi Bahasa Malaysia. It’s distributed free to all branches who ordered copies from the HQ.

12. Sekolah Demokrasi

However, realising that party publicity through the website as well as its Facebook is not adequate, the DAP launched Sekolah Demokrasi (SekDem) by the end of 2011. The purpose is to bring together a small group of Bahasa-speaking people, most of them Malays, to learn and share about democracy, social democracy and the struggle of the DAP. We have had about a dozen programmes, training some 150 participants. These are young people aged between 18 and 30. Among the party leaders who had lectured at SekDem were Anthony Loke, Tony Pua, Liew Chin Tong, Zairil Khir Johari, Steven Sim, Wong Shu Qi and Dyana Sofia (Dyana is also a SekDem alumnus). Rokatkini.com staff

Edry Faizal and Iza Suraiya are coordinating SekDem with our chief trainer Ustaz Hakim Ramlee.

Our dream is to make them become Malaysian democrats. Our aim is to get them, some if not all, to be with the party, to fulfil the hope of serving the interest of the people through the DAP. This means we hope for these young Malay democrats to become branch leaders, state leaders, local councillors, and perhaps our election candidates in the future. This is our hope for a better tomorrow.

13. Impian Malaysia

Impian Malaysia is the DAP's initiative to inform, inspire, educate, engage, and empower Malaysians. Among other things, it envisions a plural society, united as one people rising above ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic differences; to celebrate diversity, tolerance and open-mindedness, and to reject hatred, prejudices and extremism. Impian Malaysia is about sharing, caring and being with the people through activities such as building rural infrastructural projects, participating in educational programmes and joining youth empowerment initiatives. These are fun, jolly and happy activities; and have managed to attract the participation of young people.

Programmes have begun since 2013 with the launch of Impian Sarawak where DAP leaders and members with volunteers worked hand in hand with local villagers to build basic infrastructure such as roads, water and electricity supply, and other amenities. From Sarawak to Impian Sabah, and now the Impian projects are in the Peninsula with the Orang Asli community.

We hope to get more participation from young Malays which is still lacking at the moment. We hope that with more interactions and coordination among alumni of Sekdem and new Malay members with the younger members of the Party can spark more inclusive programmes for the year 2015 onwards.

14. National retreat in June

The CEC also resolved to and carried out a National Leadership retreat for all elected lawmakers of the party, themed 'New politics, New frontier'. The outcome of the retreat was the formation of several semi-formal caucuses, namely the Urban Governance Caucus, the Semi-Urban Caucus, the Impian Malaysia Caucus, and the Green Caucus. The caucuses would provide the platform for debates and discussion among party leaders, as well as to arm the membership with a new level of policy discourse for public dissemination.

15. Urban Governance Caucus meeting on 24th July 2014

Following the formation of the Urban Governance Caucus, its members conducted a two-day policy meeting in Penang, hosted by Penang DAP. The meeting produced several sub-groups focusing on Transport and mobility, Solid Waste Management, Urban Planning and Community building. There was also an overriding consensus that the caucus arrangement provided a platform for focussed sharing of best practices; and the main caucus and its sub-groups have, until present maintained a high level of ongoing communication and in depth discussions.

16. Gelang Patah Declaration Caucus meeting on 25th July 2014

On 31st March 2013, the DAP Gelang Patah Declaration “A Vision and Strategy for Indian Empowerment” was formally launched in Gelang Patah at a historic meeting attended by DAP national, state and local leaders. On the 25th July 2014, a conference was held to elaborate on the thus far delivered policies and actions pledged in the declaration; and also to forge stronger plans to embolden the agenda set by the declaration moving forward

17. Semi-urban Caucus meeting on 19th and 20th September 2014

It was identified that the semi urban constituency was an area that presents the most opportunities for the party’s growth. The Semi Urban Caucus organised a conference in Johor, specifically focussing on the political aspects of venturing into semi-urban grounds, by inviting leaders with relevant and longstanding experiences to share thoughts and methods that have aided their successes to date. Discussions include areas of policy such as the Localisation agenda, Agriculture, Horticulture and Fishery Policies., as well as the findings of an independently conducted poll on the semi urban constituency.