

## Malaysian Dream lives on in the DAP

DAP remains committed to the Malaysian Dream that respects diversity and human dignity, upholds freedom, justice, rule of law, democracy, transparency and basic human rights embodied in the Federal Constitution. DAP pledges to work with all Malaysians committed towards establishing a digital future, equal opportunity, prosperity for all and protecting the environment.

As a progressive, moderate and inclusive party, DAP must listen to the hopes of the rakyat not just with our minds but also with our hearts. We must serve them whole-heartedly and voice their aspirations without fear or favour.

We cannot do this alone but together. For this reason, DAP has worked with coalition partners who share our principles and ideals. Only through a coalition of like-minded political parties, DAP has transformed from being an opposition party to a partner in power in several state governments and finally the Federal government in 2018.

Malaysia belongs to the people regardless of age, gender, race, religion or background, whether from Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah Sarawak or whether one is Malay Chinese Indian Orang Asli KDM or Dayak. There should be no discrimination or marginalisation whether politically, socially or economically. All citizens have their rightful place under the Malaysian sun.

Just as DAP exhorts all Malaysians to help each other, respect our differences and support what is right against what is wrong, we need to share both our successes and face challenges together. Only then can we prepare our young for the future.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession, Malaysia was subjected to many threats of divisiveness caused by corruption, extremism, racism and economic deprivation and financial impoverishment. We can defeat these reactionary forces by putting our children first so that they deserve every opportunity to realise their fullest potential.

### **Let us unite to prevent our children's future from being stolen.**

I know we are dejected at the infamous Sheraton Move that caused us to lose power in the Federal government and some state governments after our historic victory in the 2018 general election as well as the disappointing results of PH in the recent Melaka, Sarawak and Johor elections. We should take heart that our situation when we were in opposition before 2008 was worse.

When I took over the position of Secretary General of the party in September 2004, I made the bold and audacious promise to take the DAP from being a perennial opposition to a partner in power. No one believed in a person who was disqualified from being a wakil rakyat after being imprisoned for a case relating to a rape victim who was detained whilst the rapist went off scot-free. But we succeeded because we dared to dream.

As Secretary General, I had set out three goals for DAP, which are still relevant today: One, we had to rebuild the morale and spirit of the party after successive elections showing little progress from 1995 to 2004. Two, we had to attract younger members and potential leaders into the party

as part and parcel of rejuvenating the spirit of the party. Finally, we must maximise the overall strength of the party by utilizing the strengths of various leaders, both young and experienced.

In less than 4 years, on 8 March 2008, together with new generations of DAP leaders and members, we created history by winning the four state governments of Kedah, Penang, Perak, Selangor and denying Barisan Nasional its two third majority in Parliament. In that election, DAP increased our seats in Parliament from 12 to 28 seats. In the 2013 and 2018 general elections, DAP increased our tally to 38 and 42 Parliamentary seats respectively.

It was a new chapter in DAP's long struggle for a better Malaysia. First we managed to check the hegemonic power of UMNO. We now have governments to showcase not only how DAP can do much better than UMNO-Barisan Nasional but also how we can be the game-changer for a cleaner, fairer and progressive Malaysia for all Malaysians.

I am grateful to the party members for the confidence and trust to serve as the Secretary-General since 2004, Chief Minister of Penang for two terms from 2008 to 2018 and Minister of Finance from 2018-2020. In less than 10 years, we managed to transform Penang from a stagnated development into the leading state in Malaysia.

Unfortunately, we did not have enough time to do the same at the Federal government even though we had singular success in fighting corruption, cleaning up the debts associated with 1MDB and saving RM50 billion through rationalising government procurement contracts. PH took the first steps to abolish the North-South Highway toll by first reducing it by 18% and not allowing any toll increase during the entire concession period, saving RM 42 billion for the government and people.

Our leaders and members stood on principles and we won on principles. This rightful mandate of PH was robbed in early 2020 from the people by the treachery of opportunistic MPs that were offered positions and funds. For this reason, we will not work with PN that betrayed us. If we are stabbed in the back once, shame on them. If we allow them to stab us in the back a second time, shame on us.

Over the next two years after Sheraton Move, Malaysia was immediately plunged into a triple crisis of health, economy, and political stability. The BN and BN governments must be punished for their failure and incompetence in managing COVID-19 that caused 4 million infections and more than 34,000 deaths as well as more than RM500 billion in economic losses from the failed serial total lockdowns.

### **Regaining The People's Support.**

In putting national and people's interest first before our own political interest, Pakatan Harapan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ismail Sabri administration for a political ceasefire to focus on injecting RM45 billion to deal with the pandemic and economic recession. Much of the financial aid for individuals and SMEs originated from the RM45 billion additional financial aid proposed by PH.

PH also required the government to enact the Anti-Hopping Law by March 2022 to stop defections that contaminated the entire democratic process. There is some confusion about the present status, the latest Parliamentary Order Paper reveals a tabling of the First Reading of the

Constitutional Amendment Bill tomorrow in Parliament. If the Anti-Hopping Law is not passed as promised in the MOU signed by the Prime Minister, then the MOU is finished and ended.

PH needs to do a better job to communicate our message if we are to regain the people's support. To succeed, we must not blame others for the loss of popular support but look at our own weaknesses as to why there is a lower voter turnout. We need to face up to our record when we were in the PH government.

PH must show it is united and move as a team. A common logo in PH would help to demonstrate that unity of purpose. Whilst DAP is tempted to use the Rocket logo, DAP will stick to the coalition logo of PH to help us to win together. No single party has won the general elections, only coalition parties have succeeded in winning power since Merdeka. We need to share victories with our allies through a common logo so that we can win more seats.

DAP had learnt its lessons from the Melaka and Sarawak state elections. Our efforts in correcting our weaknesses have shown some progress with DAP mitigating our losses by winning 10 out of 14 contested despite the lower turnout. Let me congratulate all DAP winning candidates from PH in the Johor, Melaka and Sarawak state elections.

Whilst PH has its shortcomings we are superior in performance to the Federal government in addressing the concerns of businesses, workers and the cost of living faced by the rakyat. For instance, why is there no Price Stabilisation Fund to help mitigate inflation or reduce rising food and commodity prices. Inflation will only go higher with the Russian invasion of Ukraine pushing oil prices to record highs.

Two, the government should not be imposing increases in electricity tariffs on commercial users of up to 20% and stop withdrawal of tax exemption of earnings brought back by companies to Malaysia or Johor from overseas or Johor respectively.

Three, the government should increase another RM500 million allocation for Sabah, Sarawak, the bumi community and the non-bumi community over the 2022 Budget to make up for the shortfall.

Four, the government should withdraw ACT342 in Parliament which proposes to increase the penalties and compounds for non-compliance with COVID-19 SOPs for individuals from RM1,000 to RM10,000 and to RM1 million for companies, which would impose tremendous hardship to the rakyat and businesses.

Five, the government must clarify whether it has unilaterally expanded the previous 30% bumi quota to 61%, which is a major policy change that should be done with full consultation with all stakeholders because it deals with issues of justice or fairplay, encouraging competitiveness and whether it helps to work towards a level playing field.

Six, urge the government to punish those responsible for the murders of Muhammad Adib bin Mohd Kassim, Teoh Beng Hock and custodial deaths. In welcoming the government compensation of RM1.5 million to the family of Muhammad Adib, a similar amount should be paid to Teoh Beng Hock's family and the others.

In these challenging times, DAP needs to be steadfast to our principles, practice collective leadership and continuously reach out and engage with members and the public. The state elections have shown that good service to voters is critical to winning.

We are proud that DAP has the enviable record of being the only political party in Malaysia that won 42 MPs in the 2018 general election and still retain the same 42 MPS now without a single MP resigning or defecting. This is a testament to our collective leadership and willingness to engage with each other frequently and listen to their views with an open heart.

Our party is in a transitional generation where a new Secretary General will be elected. This will be my final speech as Secretary General and I am grateful for all the support the party has given to me. I am proud that through my tenure as Secretary General, DAP has transformed itself from aspiring to be the largest opposition party to aspiring to be the next government. We have shown that DAP is capable of governing Malaysia.

I am proud that we managed to nurture the next two generations of DAP leaders who will continue the legacy of the first batch of young men and women who founded our party 56 years ago. I am proud that I handed over a stronger DAP to the next Secretary General because DAP is now the largest party in Parliament. DAP is very grateful that we have our first generation leader Saudara Lim Kit Siang still with us to guide us with his wisdom and his insights.

I will support the new Secretary General and work together with the new generation of DAP leaders to build our party, and to work with like-minded allies for a better Malaysian Malaysia. We want the new Secretary General to succeed so that the party can grow.

### **Short Tribute To Sdr Lim Kit Siang**

As we celebrate our 56th anniversary since DAP was first established in 1966, we remember the 11 young men who founded the party. 11 young men, many in their 30s, stood up to make a commitment with a confident vision of a young nation that is "free and democratic Malaysia based on the principles of racial equality, and social and economic justice, and founded on the institutions of parliamentary democracy."

DAP was young then. Saudara Dr Chen Man Hin our first National Chairman, was probably the oldest in his forties. In 1967, a 26 year old young man Saudara Lim Kit Siang, was co-opted into the CEC. Little did they know then, that Lim Kit Siang would become a giant amongst Malaysian politicians for his brilliance, courage, indomitable spirit and loyalty to ideals and principles.

For many decades, Prime Ministers and Ministers considered Lim Kit Siang the only worthy opponent. As the longest serving Parliamentary Opposition Leader, international correspondents regarded him as the best Prime Minister that Malaysia will never have because of his ethnicity. Perhaps this is the reason he has also been demonised and falsely maligned as being responsible for the 1969 May 13 riots in Kuala Lumpur when he was in Kota Kinabalu,

being anti-Malay, anti-Chinese and anti-Indian. Kit embodied the DAP's lonely struggle in opposition and ultimate success in winning power.

Lim Kit Siang's expose of corruption scandals were legendary as were his brushes with the law for his audacity in defying authority. His willingness to give up his liberty and put his life at risk

with countless threats to his life and two major detentions under the Internal Security Act. But the act that distinguished him apart was what he did not do rather than what he did. After the 2018 general election that PH won and for the first time broke UMNO's hegemony over Malaysian politics, he announced that he would not seek power or any Cabinet posts that would definitely come his way, but would make way for younger leaders.

He is a towering Malaysian for his boundless faith in the people that they would choose right against wrong. Lim Kit Siang is seen by ordinary Malaysians as a statesman and a visionary willing to take the road less travelled by boldly making decisions not for the next elections but for the next generation. DAP is the beneficiary of his love that DAP is the vehicle that bring about a better future for our children.

Our family is jealous of the time that DAP has taken away from him and that we have to share his love with the DAP. We fully respect and support his life-long determination to make Malaysian lives better. For many of us who know that without Kit leading our veteran leaders, there would be no DAP today as well as many of us who remained in DAP during the painful days in opposition due to Kit's example or the young leaders here who joined DAP because they were inspired by Kit, we want to thank Kit for all you have done.

On behalf of DAP and the DAP family, let us thank you deeply and gratefully from the bottom of our hearts. It is only fitting that we invite the keeper of our soul and conscience to say a few words on his Malaysian Dream.

Opening Speech by Lim Guan Eng at the DAP National Congress in Selangor on Sunday, 20th March 2022