

DAP to launch a nation-wide campaign to explain its call for 'Full Liberalisation' of nation-building policies to give every Malaysian an equal place under the Malaysian sun

Speech by Parliamentary Opposition Leader, DAP Secretary-General and MP for Tanjong, Lim Kit Siang, at the opening of the Johore DAP State Convention in Kulai on Sunday, 9th October 1994 at 10 a.m.

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Penang DAP held five 'Tanjong 3' Marathon Thousand-People Dinners for five consecutive nights on the Penang island at the Penang-Chinese Town Hall from Monday to Friday and will hold another five 'Tanjong 3' Marathon Thousand-People Dinners on the Penang mainland from October 20 to 24.

During the five 'Tanjong 3' Marathon Thousand-People Dinners in Penang, the DAP issued five Declarations on its Nation-Building Policies for Malaysia and announced that its general elections theme will be 'Full Liberalisation'.

The DAP will follow up from the Penang launching of the 'Full Liberalisation' movement, and launch a nation-wide campaign to explain its call for 'Full Liberalisation' of nation-building policies to give every Malaysian an equal place under the Malaysian sun.

The DAP is printing 500,000 copies of its Declaration on 'Full Liberalisation' and its 'Ten Democratisation Programme' in the various languages as part of this nation-wide campaign.

The next general elections will not be about 'Minor Liberalisation' in the past few years, but on whether there should be 'Full Liberalisation' in Malaysia to achieve the DAP's objective of a Malaysian Malaysia.

'Minor Liberalisation' is taking 'three steps forward', but in the context of the 'thirty steps backwards' in past three decades, they are inadequate and have not even fully restored the rights which had been eroded.

It is the greatest fallacy for anyone to think that the 'Minor Liberalisation' had fallen from the skies, or is the result of the 'charity' of the Barisan Nasional Government, or even worse, is the achievement of the Gerakan and MCA. This is not the case.

The 'Minor Liberalisation' are the 'tiny results' of the long-term political struggle of the people with the DAP for a more just and equal Malaysia - a Malaysian Malaysia - for the past three decades.

If we see the 'Minor Liberalisation' completely out of context of the people's struggle with the DAP for a more just and equal Malaysia, as if Malaysian politics started in 1991, we will get the impression that the Barisan Nasional Government is getting more and more enlightened and we should be happy and content with the 'Minor Liberalisation' of the past three years.

However, if we judge the 'Minor Liberalisation' in the context of the people's political struggle with the DAP for the past three decades, we will then be able to place it in a proper context.

Although we welcome the 'Minor Liberalisation' of the past three years, we cannot overlook the fact that in the past three decades, the rights of the people had suffered serious erosion and that the 'Minor

Liberalisation' of the past three years had not even fully restored these lost rights.

If we regard the 'Minor Liberalisation' of the past three years as 'three forward steps', and look at them in isolation, then they are a great advance. However, if we place the 'Minor Liberalisation' in the context of the past three decades, where the Barisan Nasional policies had made the people to 'go back by thirty steps', taking 'three steps forward' while welcome is clearly not sufficient or satisfactory.

This is why DAP has called for 'Full Liberalisation' as the people and the DAP cannot be content and satisfied with the 'Minor Liberalisation' of the past three years - which have not even restored the political, economic, educational, cultural and citizenship rights eroded away in the past three decades.

The 'Full Liberalisation' call of the DAP will not only serve as a rallying cry for all Malaysians to demand a more just and equal Malaysia where all Malaysians can enjoy an equal place under the Malaysian sun, it will also serve as a standard to measure as to how far short-the Barisan Nasional's 'Minor Liberalisation' had fallen from the legitimate aspirations of the people.

Will the 1,296 Chinese primary schools get RM125 million out of the RM800 million school 'maintenance funds' for this year in the spirit of Anwar Ibrahim's 'We Are All One Family' philosophy?

I am glad that Deputy Education Minister, Dr. Fong Chan Onn, has confirmed my revelation on Wednesday that the total sum which the Finance Ministry had allocated to the Education Ministry for 'schools maintenance funds' this year is RM800 million.

I of course do not expect him to admit that this million allocation is all part of the general elections 'goodies' package amounting to RM2 billion to use public funds to buy votes for the coming general elections.

MCA should maintain some standards of political debate and discussion and stop telling lies - for the DAP not only does not oppose the government allocation of schools 'maintenance funds' to Chinese primary schools, we want a fair and equal allocation as compared to national primary schools.

Let Fong Chan Onn answer the following questions:

1. Can the Chinese primary schools expect an allocation of RM125 million from this RM800 million 'school maintenance funds' this year, in the spirit of Anwar Ibrahim's 'We Are All One Family' philosophy?

The allocation of RM125 million to Chinese primary schools is worked out on the basis that Chinese primary school students comprise 25 per cent of total primary school population and should therefore be entitled to 25 per cent of total maintenance fund allocation to all primary schools?

If the Education Ministry is not prepared to be fair and allocate RM125 million from the schools maintenance fund for Chinese primary schools, then Anwar Ibrahim's "We Are All One Family" declaration has no real meaning yet at government policy or implementation level.

2. Can the Government announce that this allocation to Chinese primary schools, especially partially-assisted Chinese primary schools, is not meant for this year alone because of the forthcoming general elections, but represent a new Chinese education policy change of the Barisan Nasional Government - and that henceforth the Government would bear all financial responsibility for maintenance, development and building of new classrooms, school premises and even the construction of new Chinese primary schools, whether fully or partially assisted?

If Fong Chan Onn cannot give satisfactory answer to these two questions, how can the Chinese

community be blamed if it regards the latest allocation as an 'general election gimmick' although it still nonetheless welcome the allocation?