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Kedah-Club

SECRETS BEHIND THE FORMATION OF THE KEDAH CLUB IN KL

By: Abdul Halim Taib

KUALA LUMPUR: The wish of the Kedahans for a club in the Klang Valley finally became a reality when a large number of them gathered on March 13 to set it up formally.

The idea for the club was mooted by Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Syed Razak Syed Zain who hoped that it could serve as a linkage for all Kedahans residing in and around the Klang Valley.

Like the clubs for the Kelantanese, Johorians, Perakians, Sabahans and Sarawakians which had long been established, the Kedah Club is the latest for the networking and opportunity for its members to help each other in whatever field they are in.

The gathering which was initially scheduled to be held at the Kedah Commercial Centre at the 30th Floor of UBN Tower here received such an overwhelming response that the organisers were forced to move the function to a leading hotel next door.

The organisers had expected some 80 people but instead almost 400 turned up for the function.

MB'S AGENDA VS PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS

What the formation of the club has made clear is the agenda of the Menteri Besar: he needs the support of the Kedahans to realise the blueprint of the development programmes for the rice-bowl state.

Launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in conjunction with the 56th Umno general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) on June 20 last year, the Kedah Development Action Plan 2010 (PTKM) is Syed Razak's key to transform the socio-economic landscape of the state.

The action plan is also proof that the state government under Syed Razak is serious about fulfilling the pledges made during the last general election.

State Financial Officer Datuk Ku Nahar Ku Ibrahim, while disclosing the various programmes spelt out in the PTKM 2010, said that the state government was actively working towards making the industrial sector one of the important sectors to generate economic growth.

ECONOMIC SPINOFFS

Ku Nahar explained that among the projects being implemented to generate considerable economic spinoffs is the Kota Perdana Development Project in Bukit Kayu Hitam covering an area of about 3,470 hectare and costing RM10 billion.

That project includes an ASEAN Free Trade and Industrial zone, an airport, a business/commercial centre, a residential area, an institution of higher learning as well as a customs and immigration complex.

He said that an allocation of RM65.3 million had also been approved to provide support services in Phase 3 of the Kulim High Technology Park (KHTP) involving an area of about 400 hectares.

Syed Razak, in his speech, pleaded to the Kedahans living outside the state to participate in the projects.

He stressed that the action plan focused on important sectors, such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), tourism and agricultural industries, education, human resource development, infrastructure as well as social and entrepreneurial development, all of which should be enough to

lure them.

INVITING MASS PARTICIPATION

"You may not have come home for a very long time but if you were to come back now, everything is available there -- from highways, airport, high technology projects to institutions of higher learning, we have all these," said Syed Razak with his trademark amiable smile.

"The aim of this gathering is to ask of all you to work together in developing the planned projects as well as to enjoy the outcome of the projects afterwards. I would not be able to do it alone...even if I were a good football player I may not be able to score if the ball is not at my feet," he said.

At the gathering, Syed Razak also fielded questions from those who wanted to know what benefits they would gain from the projects.

Despite his explanations, many were still unclear as to the "real reason" behind the formation of the club. Some even speculated that the move was merely to fish for support in preparations for the next general election.

Nevertheless, a member of the club's pro-tem committee, Baha Azuwan, considered the formation of the club as very substantial for it provided a chance for Kedah people living here to keep abreast with the developments in their home state besides creating a network among themselves.

What is not said, however, is the fact that many of the Kedahans in the Klang Valley were the educated, intellectuals, professionals and businessmen who had made their fame and fortune outside the state and they could make a difference to Syed Razak's plan to develop their home state.

And perhaps the best way to meet them is through the Kedah Club. --
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