

Chapter 14

Transforming Malaysia



We must transform the Government to achieve Vision 2020, which remains the beacon for our nation. Although Malaysia has come a long way, our economy is at risk of being stuck as a ‘middle-income’ economy, and we must make significant improvements in reducing crime and corruption, improving education, rural basic infrastructure and urban public transport, and boosting the incomes of low income households before Malaysia becomes a fully developed nation. The Government, as the primary facilitator of Malaysia’s development, must transform itself so that Malaysia can achieve Vision 2020. We have no alternative.

This roadmap details a bold and unprecedented programme to transform the Government. The scope of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) is broad, encompassing every ministry within Government, while still being focused on priorities that matter most to the rakyat (i.e., *People First*). Our aspirations are concrete and high, with stretch targets against each of the priorities. Furthermore, we must deliver quickly. Malaysia does not have the luxury of time to achieve Vision 2020, and we have heard the rakyat’s clear demands for outcomes, not just more plans and inputs. Our focus is very much on making fundamental changes to deliver big results fast (i.e., *Performance Now*). This programme will ensure every Malaysian – rich and poor, urban and rural, educated and less educated, young and old, men and women, powerful and powerless, regardless of race and religion – enjoys the fruits of the nation’s development and lives in an inclusive and diverse society where he or she considers himself/herself, first and foremost, a Malaysian (i.e., *1Malaysia*).

We realise that we cannot use the same approach as before to transform our government and achieve substantial results quickly. **Therefore, we are approaching government transformation in a radical new way**, while still leveraging the successes and lessons from the past and from government transformation efforts in other countries. This radical new way embraces six elements:

- Institutionalising a new way of working (e.g., Labs, Workcamps) including an approach or ‘engine’ focused on doing and then improving, instead of just planning, and which brings the best civil servants together in cross-agency teams to develop detailed solutions
- Proactively gathering input and feedback from the rakyat e.g., through Open Days, surveys, the internet and SMS
- Publishing this roadmap, effectively a performance contract between the Government and the rakyat, that fully commits us to delivery, by transparently outlining concrete targets and plans
- Instituting 16 delivery principles to guide how we will deliver differently. These have literally been signed off by the Cabinet and are now being applied in day-to-day delivery
- Establishing PEMANDU, a new hybrid organisation which draws talent from both the public and private sectors, to act as catalyst for transformation and to help ministries deliver on their priorities
- Publishing an annual report that will transparently and objectively tell the rakyat what the Government has and has not yet delivered and how the programme will be improved over time

In Malaysia’s history, we have often taken the road less travelled and pragmatically charted our own path. We are doing it again. No other government in the world has undertaken such a bold transformation programme with all the above six elements. We are confident that we will deliver. When we succeed, many

other countries will be looking-up to Malaysia to learn how we transformed our nation by transforming government.

We understand that no matter how well laid-out the plans are, the only thing that ultimately matters is delivery of outcomes that the rakyat can touch, see and feel. **Delivering these outcomes will not be easy.** There will be setbacks along the way, including missed targets, initiatives that may not work, stakeholders who push back, resistance to change and new challenges we could not have foreseen. In transformation programmes of this scale it is also quite common for things to get worse – or feel like they are getting worse – before they get better. Despite these inevitable challenges, we must deliver.

We cannot, and should not, transform the nation on our own. The days of ‘Government knows best’ are over, and we pledge to work hand-in-hand with the rakyat, the private sector, the social sector and other key stakeholders. We will continue to invite input before making decisions, encourage co-participation in delivery, seek regular feedback and measure our stakeholders’ perceptions of our delivery. Together, we must deliver. Together, we will deliver.

We will stay the course. When the GTP hits inevitable challenges and setbacks, the Government and all Malaysians must remind ourselves of what is really at stake here and continue to stay the course. We will stay the course, and we will transform Malaysia into a developed high-income nation and achieve Vision 2020. We will stay the course, and all Malaysians will be proud as we establish Malaysia’s rightful reputation and position in the world, and become a case study for other countries. We will stay the course, and make a positive difference in the day-to-day lives of each and every Malaysian – from women and children feeling safer on our streets, to poor and rural families enjoying better quality of life, access to basic infrastructure and good education, to people getting to work more easily, and to businesses enjoying lower costs. We will stay the course, and fulfil our most important obligation: transforming Malaysia for future generations of Malaysians.