

DAP: Why didn't Najib consult us on MACC reform?

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DAP today questioned the sincerity of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's election promise to reform the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) as there is no need for him to secure a two-thirds majority to push through a constitutional amendment when he can easily do it by consulting with Pakatan Rakyat.

Lim Guan Eng and DAP in a statement issued today, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng urged Najib to stop "playing general election games" but prove his sincerity about fighting corruption by publicly declaring the assets of cabinet members.

Yesterday, Najib announced that BN will amend the constitution to form an Anti-Corruption Service Commission to give MACC the power to appoint and dismiss its members should BN secure a two-thirds parliamentary majority in the next general election.

"This statement reveals the prime minister's insincerity. If he were truly serious, he could easily have consulted Pakatan on this matter. Pakatan has no hesitation in giving support. There have been many occasions where Pakatan has cast aside political partisanship for the public interest," said Guan Eng.

He vowed that the opposition coalition is willing to engage the BN on this matter and will generally support any effort to strengthen public institutions in the fight against corruption.

However, Guan Eng pointed out that so far there is nothing to convince Malaysians that the MACC is either independent or effectively performing its duty to fight corruption.

He cited Malaysia's drop in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) from 56 in 2010 to 60 last year, as well as the inaction towards the RM250 million "cows for condos scandal".

In his parting note, the Penang chief minister again challenged Najib to follow in the footsteps of the Penang state government by ordering all federal ministers and deputy ministers to make a public declaration of their assets.

'Is it to enable MACC to victimise Pakatan?'

In another statement, Guan Eng's father Lim Kit Siang, who is DAP parliamentary leader, questioned whether the pledge of more powers to MACC is to carry out a more effective fight against corruption, or is it to enable the MACC to victimise Pakatan leaders and activists such as had happened to Teoh Beng Hock.

Describing Najib's promise as "extraordinary", Kit Siang commented that any meaningful or serious proposal to strengthen MACC should not be contingent on an election victory.

Sharing his son's view, Kit Siang (left) said that Pakatan is prepared to support such a constitutional amendment convinced that it is a step towards making the MACC more efficient, independent and professional.

However, he noted that the existence of separate commissions, for instance for the judicial and police services, have not been able to guarantee public confidence in the efficiency, independence, integrity and professionalism of the judicial and police services.

"If Najib is serious about anti-corruption, he should have addressed the issue of why Malaysia under his premiership is perceived, both nationally and internationally, as even more corrupt than under the

previous five prime ministers.”

Comparing Malaysia’s CPI with that of 1995, said Kit Siang, Malaysia under Najib is even more corrupt than under the two previous prime ministers - Mahathir Mohamad and Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

In the first CPI in 1995, Malaysia was ranked 23rd out of 41 countries with a CPI score of 5.28, but dropped to 60th with the lowest CPI score of 4.3 after 17 years despite numerous anti-corruption campaigns, two major anti-corruption pieces of legislation, the ‘elevation’ of the former Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) into MACC, the National Integrity Plan, and the 1Malaysia Government Transformation Programme, he said.

"In comparison, Indonesia was ranked at the very bottom at 41st in 1995 with CPI score of 1.94, while China was ranked 40th with a CPI score of 2.16 in 1995.

"Now Indonesia is ranked 100th with a CPI score of 3.0 in 2011 while China is ranked 75th with a score of 3.6," the Ipoh Timor MP added.

Kit Siang also challenged Najib to disclose how many politicians had been arrested by MACC in 2011 as media reports showed only four were nabbed.

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