

## **BN's Integrity Pledge just a 'smokescreen', says DAP**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**February 22, 2013**

**By Lee Long Hui**

DAP deputy chairperson Tan Kok Wai slammed the act of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak signing the Election Integrity Pledge as a "smokescreen" to divert attention from the real issue of corruption.

Tan said the pledge, drawn up by Transparency International-Malaysia (TI-M), is "only a social contract, it is not legally binding (and) imposes no restrictions".

He told a press conference today: "I would like to say that it is rather a political gimmick in order to divert the attention of the people from the BN government's real failures, and also its awful performance and record in fighting corruption.

"It's a smokescreen, a counter measure to show that the BN government and its leaders, despite not looking clean at all, are hoping to dupe the people, make a fool of the people as if they are really committed to fight corruption during the general election."

Citing the 'fight corruption' section under the National Key Results Areas (NKRA), he pointed out that the people have yet to see the government implement any measure to tackle the issue of political funding.

Tan (right) also said that the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranking for Malaysia has dipped to 56th and 60th places in the past two years respectively.

"If the government is really serious in fighting corruption, of course our international standing on the (corruption) transparency index would not have fallen so low..."

On the matter of clean and fair elections, Tan noted that there was a loophole in the 1954 Election Offences Act, despite the fact that the pledge depends on the person who signs it to adhere to the act.

He said that the flaw allowed all BN candidates to spend more than RM200,000 and RM100,000 for their parliamentary and state constituencies respectively, if the money is spent indirectly by "supporters and friends" of the candidates.

"How can the Election Commission ensure that the Election Offences Act is observed, and how will TI-M ensure that BN candidates will not spend over the limit, which will put the Pakatan candidates into a very disadvantage position?" he asked.

Gov't urged to enact a law to declare assets

DAP national publicity secretary Tony Pua (right), national treasurer Fong Kui Lun, and

assistant national organising secretary Vincent Wu were also present at the press conference.

Tan, who is also Cheras MP, challenged the government to enact a law to compel all the members of administration and the elected representatives from both sides to make a solemn pledge to declare their assets.

He said the pledge must also include their spouses and close family members.

"All this information will be available through the gazette, and will also be available on the social media, (so that) the people can access all such information," he added.

Asked whether the Pakatan Rakyat representatives will also sign such a pledge if the BN government really comes out with one, Tan merely said that they would first have to study the content.

"It (the pledge) will be done by the Pakatan government, not by the BN government," said Tan, hinting that the opposition coalition would take over Putrajaya in the coming general election.

Nevertheless, Pua said, the office holders in the Pakatan state governments of Selangor and Penang had already declared their assets prior to this.

Last April, after four MPs - two from BN and two from the opposition - became the first batch of MPs to sign the pledge, Pua told Malaysiakini that DAP would get all its MPs to sign the pledge to demonstrate its commitment to integrity and transparency.

"Yes, I'm organising all of DAP's MPs together, rather than one by one," he had said.

On the other hand, after Najib's pledge-signing on Wednesday, BN leaders have been attacking Pakatan for refusing to follow suit.

One of them is MCA Youth secretary-general Chai Kim Sen (right) who issued a statement today urging Pakatan to sign the pledge, "rather than just paying lip service for superficial politics".

Chai said that the reluctance to sign the pledge showed that the Pakatan parties do not share a common ideology.

"Pakatan is only good at extolling about being corrupt-free, (and urging for) clean and fair elections... if Pakatan is sincere, it should promote the pledge and lead by example to practise clean and fair elections in the coming general election.

"With the general election just around the corner, Pakatan's bigwigs are showing their true colours. They are unable to carry out even such a basic, simple political deed," Chai added.

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