

DAP to 'prick conscience of the powerful' in S'wak

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By Lawrence Yong

The DAP has launched 'Impian Sarawak, an initiative to fight poverty in rural areas of Sarawak as well as to win hearts and minds ahead of the next general election.

It plans to raise up to RM250,000 a month from the public to provide water and electricity supply and education - a move that is also intended to shame the BN government which, the party said, has failed in its basic duty to the people.

NONE"Even after 50 years, you still cannot provide water and electricity ... something is very, very wrong," said secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said at the party headquarters today.

"We want to prick the conscience of those in power in Sarawak."

Money raised through fund-raising dinners and donations will be channeled towards projects run by party and non-party members. The first fund-raising event will be held in Selangor on Oct 10.

Publicity secretary Tony Pua said the DAP aims to run up to five projects a month at a cost of RM20,000 to RM50,000 each.

The maiden project is to build a water system for Kampung Sait, located a 40 minute drive followed by a two-hour walk from Kuching. The village was displaced as a result of the construction of Bengoh dam.

Since the pre-launch of the initiative via a website, the first project - slated to run from Sept 28 to Oct 6 - has attracted some 50 volunteers, who are required to pay for their flights, food and accommodation.

The DAP also claimed that BN has a cruel strategy to keep rural Sarawakians in poverty so that their votes can be easily 'bought' during elections.

NONE"It's the BN keeping the people poor so that they will support the BN. So, one of our purposes is to uplift the livelihood and conditions of living ... thereby bringing political awareness of how important it is to have a clean and transparent government," Sarawak DAP head Chong Chieng Jen (left) said.

He noted that Sarawak's revenue stood at over RM4 billion for the last two years,

with over three-quarters of this coming from the sale of its natural resources. Yet, Sarawak is the fourth least-developed state in Malaysia.

"We seek to make an impact in Sarawak, a key electoral battleground for its state election in 2015 and in the eventual takeover of Putrajaya in the 14th general election," said Lim.

BN won 25 of the 31 parliamentary seats in Sarawak that it contested in GE13, a major contribution to its total of 133 federal seats which led to it retaining control of Putrajaya.

The state has been under the rule of chief minister Abdul Taib Mahmud for 32 years.

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