

MCA to PM: GLCs don't belong to just one race

MalaysiaKini.com

Sept 15, 2013

Amidst the cheers for Putrajaya's new economic plan for the bumiputera community, MCA Youth today reminded the premier that government-linked companies (GLCs) should not set race-based targets because it is funded by all taxpayers.

"We are aware that today's local GLCs have developed to where they are based on the resources from taxpayers of all ethnicity.

"Therefore, there should be no racial distinction in the performance of GLCs," he said in a statement today," said MCA Youth chief Wee Ka Siong in a press release today.

He said that the GLCs require the best talents to compete globally and resorting to the narrow view on race will cause them to fall behind.

Wee was responding to the far-reaching multi-billion ringgit race-based policies announced by Najib for the bumiputera community yesterday.

Among the measures include having GLCs to set targets for bumiputera participation, particularly in the area of procurement, which will be a criterion for the GLCs' key performance index (KPI).

Wee, acknowledged that Najib has to face the political reality of rewarding BN's support base from the last general election but warned the race-based measures will have "far-reaching" consequences in the long term.

"We must thoroughly examine how this policy will impact other races," he said.

Colour blind approach

The Ayer Hitam MP pointed out that there were no such race-based when the non-bumiputera community threw its support behind the ruling coalition when a significant portion of Malay voters abandoned it in 1999.

When trying to strengthen the competitiveness of the Malay community, Wee urged the government to be fair and reasonable by also helping non-Malay low-income earners.

"The formulation of any affirmative action policies should benefit all across the board and not just intended to uplift a community from a particular ethnicity.

"The so-called 'disadvantaged groups' are colour-blind regardless of race, religion and region," he said.

A colour blind approach, he added, will ultimately benefit the bumiputera community the most.

Weighing in on education, Wee, who was former deputy education minister, said the measures to enhance Mara institutions for bumiputeras was acceptable but again stressed that the overall education policy should not be discriminatory.

He urged Najib to continue being a "prime minister for all", adding that the upcoming Budget 2014 should be based on needs and merit.

Meanwhile, Centre for Public Policy Studies (CPPS) chairperson Ramon Navaratnam expressed similar views on Putrajaya's need to show inclusiveness.

"May I also appeal to the prime minister and government to make the bumiputera strategy inclusive, caring and compassionate for all Malaysians since there are large number of poor non-bumiputeras as well," he said.

Ramon said it was essential for the government to stay the course on moderation and national unity under the auspices of 1Malaysia.

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