

DAP teaches BN how to win Chinese votes
MalaysiaKini.com
May 8, 2014

Fairer policies and not threats will help BN win back the support of the Chinese community, Sarawak opposition leader Chong Chieng Jen said.

"If the chief minister (Adenan Satem) wishes to win the hearts of the Chinese community to support BN, it is not through threats that the Chinese will be marginalised in the state planning policy.

"These threats will not be well received by the community," he said during the debate on the governor's address at the state assembly.

The Kota Sentosa assemblyperson was referring to Adenan's warning that the Chinese must support the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) and BN if they wanted development.

SUPP, a Chinese-based party and member of BN, lost 13 out of 19 seats contested in the 2011 state election and lost all six Chinese-majority parliament seats in the 2013 general election.

Chong said Adenan must reveal policies that are worth supporting such as the annual allocation for Chinese schools.

"There was an announcement about a parcel of land some 2,000 hectares somewhere in the northern part of Sarawak for Chinese middle schools.

"That announcement was made many years ago. Until now the land title has not been issued and until now I believe there is no road access to the land," he added.

Chong also questioned if the parcel of land would be subjected to native customary rights claim.

"Once the land is alienated to the board of management, and if that claim surfaces, what will happen? The government is pitting one group of people against another," he added.

Chong said there are many state lands in the vicinity of Kuching worth millions of ringgit per acre.

"If the government is sincere, it could easily identify about 10 acres to be alienated to the Chinese schools where they can start building shop houses which they can sell or rent in order to generate income.

"This is one way to help the Chinese community, and the other way is just to allocate a sum of RM10 million or RM20 million a year for the Chinese schools. What is so difficult, after all, we have RM5 billion revenue a year," he added.

Open tenders for government contracts

Other methods to woo Chinese voters, the DAP leader said, are a fairer economic policy such as open tenders for government contracts and for the government administration to be more efficient, transparent and clean.

He said when developers apply for sub-division approval for their land to build houses, they have to go to the State Planning Authority (SPA) for approval.

"Some of the applications sit in the SPA office for months or even years before the applications are approved. All these add on to the financial cost of the developers.

"At the end of the day such costs will be transferred to the house buyers. Why is there no time frame set or a guideline set to fix the time when application is received and approved.

"This will cut down a lot of red tapes, a lot of wasted time, a lot of financial cost and it will also prevent corruption," he added.

Chong (left) said a fairer land policy on land lease renewal could also help BN win over the hearts of the Chinese community and urban people.

Citing a case in Betong where the state government froze leases for lands situated within a 3km radius of the town, Chong said the leases would not be renewed upon expiry.

"It is a blanket freezing on renewal of land leases. That policy is for the common people, but not for developers close to the powers that be.

"These are policies that give the government a bad name," he added.