

Clear the air, DAP's first request to Jokowi
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DAP is hoping that newly-elected Indonesian Joko "Jokowi" Widodo will put an end to the haze which affects neighbouring countries, including Malaysia, on an annual basis.

Party secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said the new president should call for a halt of illegal forest burning in Sumatra and Kalimantan, which contributes to the smog.

"DAP voices the hopes of 28 million Malaysians that a keen environmentalist like Jokowi can finally break the stalemate and end the annual haze pollution that is tormenting us even now," he added in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Penang chief minister also described the outcome of the Indonesian presidential election as a triumph for democratic principles of majority rules, fighting corruption and clean politics without smear tactics.

"Malaysia can learn how to conduct an election process fairly and properly that respects the principles of 'one-person, one-vote, one-value' principle," he said.

"Democracy is not democracy when the minority rules over the majority," he added in reference to BN forming government despite the opposition securing a higher percentage of the votes.

Lim also lauded Jokowi for refusing to engage in a smear campaign although similar tactics were used against him in the presidential election.

"Finally Indonesia has proven that smear tactics that attempted to destroy Jokowi's character that he is not a Muslim or that he is subservient to non-Muslims did not work," he added.

Haze expected until September

Meanwhile Bernama today reported the haze over certain areas in the west coast of peninsular Malaysia and Klang Valley as a result of open burning activities in Central Sumatra, Indonesia is expected to persist until September, according to the Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) Ministry.

"The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite imagery map released by the Asean Specialised Meteorological Center (ASMC) yesterday showed moderate smoke haze swirling from the Riau province in Central Sumatra towards the central and northern part of the peninsula," it said in a statement today.

The statement said NOAA detected 42 hotspots in Sumatra, eight in Sarawak, three in Pahang and one in Selangor.

A total of 4,400 open burning cases, of which 1,435 involved agricultural land and 897, forests, were detected in the first seven months of this year.

Based on investigations conducted by the ministry, 1,011 cases involved bush fires, construction sites (136), garbage dumping sites (70), industrial areas (34) and small fires (817), said the statement.

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