

Fan Yew Teng a humble, true servant of the rakyat
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The DAP's Fan Yew Teng made his mark in the political arena way back in 1974, when he defeated PPP giant SP Seenivasagam in the Menglembu parliamentary seat during the general election that year.

Relating this historic event that ended the political career of Seenivasagam, DAP vice-chairperson M Kulasegaran said that he was then a young schoolboy and he hero worshipped Fan after this.

Kulasegaran said Fan (right) left the party in 1978 , over differences in NONEparty ideology with the leaders and returned to the DAP after 20 years, in August 1998.

The Ipoh Barat MP said he was shocked and sad to learn about the death in Bangkok of his comrade Fan, whom he had known personally for more than a decade. Fan, 68, died of cancer at a Bangkok hospital on Tuesday.

Showering praises on the man he described as his "former political guardian who had always been a compassionate person, ever so generous and humble", he said Fan and he soon became very close and that he would often seek Fan's views and advice on political issues.

He also recalled that Fan had an Indian woman to clean up his rented house in Ipoh and although he did not have much money, he paid her well to ensure that she would have decent food on the table for her family.

An activist who was passionate about the environment

"Always a sporting person, Fan never failed to amuse me when he said that Malaysians overeat and thus walking and cycling were his daily activities," Kulasegaran said, adding that veteran politician and social activist was also passionate about environmental issues and was very concerned about the mutilation of Perak's limestone hills.

Fan truly loved his country and the people and he was very committed to the cause of fighting for an equal and just society for all.

Kulasegaran (below) recalled another matter in 2004, when he sought Fan's NONEhelp to vet a paper he had prepared after being invited to speak before the New Zealand Parliament on the issue of Malaysia becoming a member of International Criminal Court.

Fan threw it back to him and said, "Kula, when you speak in a foreign land, you speak as a Malaysian MP, not like a narrow Opposition MP."

Fan was always ready to give his assistance to the minority and downtrodden in Malaysian

society. He was a good, honourable, principled and honest man who would be missed by many, Kulasegaran added.

Perak DAP vice-chief A Sivanesan said Fan loved Indian food and was never a racist but a true Malaysian who moved freely among all segments of the society.

State party chief Ngeh Koo Ham said he had known Fan for 10 years and described him as a very simple and humble person who dressed plainly, wore slippers and mostly took the bus to his destinations.

"As far as I know, he did not own any property, lived in a rented house and never amassed any wealth," Ngeh said. "He loved a spartan, frugal life and his political cause was to serve the people and fight for justice and a better environment for all Malaysians.

"He was a great patriot and a statesman who took up all the issues affecting the rakyat," the Sitiawan assemblyperson added.

Meanwhile, state party secretary Nga Kor Ming said in an SMS said that the country had lost a great son, the party a leader and the people have lost a friend.

"However, the dreams pursued by Fan remain relevant, and his struggle for equality is unfinished. We must live long enough to see his dreams accomplished," the Taiping MP said.

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