

**'We accept Malay leadership, not Malay supremacy'**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Nov 27, 2008**

MCA deputy president Chua Soi Lek today said that it was time to change the concept of power sharing within Barisan Nasional.

He said that the oft-used slogan of 'Ketuanan Melayu', or Malay supremacy, that indicated a master and servant relationship was unacceptable.

"We accept Malay leadership, but not Malay supremacy," he said in his speech which was delivered at the Kancil Awards Festival Speaker Series this morning.

"When we say we reject 'Ketuanan Melayu', we are not challenging the Malay special rights. It is enshrined in our constitution and nobody can take that away at the present moment."

He added that in the same way Bahasa Melayu as the national language was also protected in the federal constitution.

"That status is acknowledged and respected. So when we learn other languages or put up signs in other languages, it's not challenging the status of our national language."

However Chua said that the time has come to stop using the old template.

"Our country needs to move on. Moving on is a futuristic thing. We are being defined by the past because we are still living in it.

"Of course, there are people who will surely say 'If it ain't broken, don't fix it!' Eh friend, it's broken lah," he said.

**Think less along ethnic lines**

He said that the Malaysian way of thinking needed to be changed as well with Malaysians learning to be less confrontational, controversial, emotional on issues that cross racial lines.

"If we become less emotional/confrontational and more objective, then the political temperature in Malaysia would be more 'normal'.

"There should be more consensuses, more accommodating, more equitable basis; not a master and servant relationship. The rights of all communities are enshrined in the constitution.

"Leaders do not necessarily know best. Maybe only what is best for them and not for the rakyat," he said.

He added that a main change that was needed was for Malaysians to think more like Malaysians and less along ethnic lines.

"Practising your own religion, culture and traditions does not make you less Malaysian. If we can change our thinking that anything affecting different communities affects us as a country, we become more Malaysian, less divided," he said.

"Our politics is still organised along racial lines. We need to be issue-centric, not ethno-centric."

### **Burning the political goodwill**

Chua also touched on the changes brought about after the March general election where voters deserted BN, allowing the opposition Pakatan Rakyat to not just deny the two-thirds in Parliament but also to wrest four states from BN.

The election, he said, marked the start of the two-party system, thus forcing political parties to change to be competitive.

"The rakyat voted for change. It is very obvious, that the BN leaders, my party included, were not prepared and were caught unaware of the voters' sentiments.

"BN needs to change. It is not an option, but necessary to face the new political reality, to remain relevant and competitive," he said.

Sadly however, he said, the much-wanted change had not happened although time was running out.

"I think the opposition and even to some extent the BN is burning political goodwill that was previously built.

"Ask any citizen and very few will be able to tell you about any concrete improvements in opposition-controlled states.

"Similarly, even after the stinging rebuke of the election, I don't think any member of the rakyat will say 'Yes, the government has heard us, they're starting to improve things'."

### **Even a convict is given a second chance**

Last month, Chua made a political comeback by winning the MCA deputy president's post after having had to resign from all government and party posts in January over a sex scandal.

"And when I stood for the party elections, I wanted to change the perception that if you are a public figure you can't make mistakes and take responsibility over it and move on. Even a convict is given a second chance.

"What would we tell our children who makes mistakes? That there's no turning back, no way to rectify the wrong or to own up? So when I stood for the party election I was challenging the norm.

"I believe that it is better to be defeated by your comrades in a transparent election than by a nameless, faceless videographer and tape that was set up to end my career."

Chua's party MCA is the second biggest coalition partner in BN and along with so many other partners, it too suffered humiliating defeat in the last general election.

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