

## Learn from Tan Cheng Lock's legacy, youths urged



**Forward thinker:** Tan played a pivotal role in Malaya's path to independence and for civil rights for the Chinese community through moderation, unity and multiracial cooperation.

By **JAAYNE JEEVITA**  
jaayne@thestar.com.my

**SUNGAI LONG:** MCA's founding president, the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock, has left behind an unparalleled legacy for Malaysia's multicultural political framework through his vision of unity, citizenship and equality.

"His stand against colonial divide-and-rule, his calls for inclusion, and his push for self-governance, remind us that national progress is possible when we work together for the common good," said Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong, who is the 10th MCA president.

"Let his legacy remind us that meaningful change is not achieved by standing on the sidelines but by engaging others, including those with differing views, to build something better together," he said at the launch of the Tun Tan Cheng Lock Institute of Social Studies (TCLI) at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Sungai Long Campus here yesterday.

In this vein, Dr Wee implores the young generation of scholars,



**Honouring his legacy:** Dr Wee (fourth from left) posing for a photo during the launch of the TCLI in UTAR Sungai Long campus. With him are (from left) Prof Chee Beng, Prof Faidz, Prof Ewe, Dr Hou, Siok Choo, Dr Fong, and Assoc Prof Chin. - LOW BOON TAT/The Star

students and public thinkers to learn from Tan.

TCLI was established to honour Tan's legacy as a Malaysian statesman who played a pivotal role in Malaya's path to independence and the advancement of civil rights for the Chinese community through moderation, unity and multiracial cooperation.

TCLI evolved from the Tun Tan Cheng Lock Centre of Policy Studies (TCLC) that was established in 2017.

Over the past eight years, TCLC had organised 94 events, conducted two online surveys and published nine books.

TCLI will serve as a research hub, consolidating the work of two key centres under its umbrella: the Centre for Social and Policy Studies (CSPS) and the Asean Research Centre for a Community with Shared Future (ACSF).

Both centres aim to promote

high-impact, interdisciplinary research, policy dialogues and regional collaboration on issues related to society, governance and cultural development.

Dr Wee said the institute will carry forward Tan's spirit by promoting social research, policy analysis and regional engagement to better understand our past, respond to present challenges, and shape a more united future.

"Let this institute be a living legacy - one that continues to spark thoughtful dialogue, advocate balanced policies, and inspire a deeper sense of civic responsibility in Malaysia and beyond," he added.

Also present at the launch were TCLI steering committee chairman Datuk Seri Dr Hou Kok Chung, United Malacca Bhd chairperson and Tan's granddaughter Datin Paduka Tan Siok Choo,

UTAR president Prof Datuk Dr Ewe Hong Tat, UTAR council member Tan Sri Dr Fong Chan Onn, UTAR vice-president (R&D and Commercialisation) Prof Dr Faidz Abd Rahman, UTAR TCLI director Assoc Prof Dr Chin Yee Mun, and UTAR Faculty of Arts and Social Science adjunct professor Dr Tan Chee Beng.

Prof Ewe said TCLI represents a renewed commitment to understanding the challenges facing society and to thoughtful, evidence-based solutions for the future.

"TCLI will serve as a dynamic platform for interdisciplinary research, policy analysis and academic knowledge.

"Institutes like TCLI are not built only with bricks and budgets, but with ideals, aspirations and deep belief in the power of knowledge to shape a better world," he said.