

Putrajaya's new Bumiputera plan shows Najib's lack of political will, says Kit Siang
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BY LEE SHI-IAN

Putrajaya's new plan to empower Malays appears to show that it has ditched the National Economic Model (NEM) designed to get Malaysia out of the middle income trap, said DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang.

"Najib should publicly state whether he has finally given up on the ghost of the NEM. It seems he lacks the political will and leadership to defend the NEM," the Gelang Patah Member of Parliament said in a statement today.

Lim (pic) was responding to the unveiling of the Bumiputera Economic Empowerment Agenda on Saturday by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in Shah Alam.

The new plan includes a slew of economic programmes as well as cash aid which Putrajaya said was aimed at helping Bumiputeras financially.

Lim questioned whether the latest announcement indicates an about-turn by Najib on what he declared three years earlier under the NEM.

When he launched the NEM in 2010, Najib stated that race-based distribution of resources contributed to growing dissension.

Lim cited two sections of the NEM, including a call to do away with rent-seeking and market-distorting features.

Chapter 6 of the NEM states that affirmative action will be carried out equally across all communities and be based on market criteria. It also announced an Equal Opportunities Commission to stop "undue discrimination when occasional abuses by dominant groups are encountered".

"Because of opposition from racists and chauvinists, Najib has abandoned the idea of an Equal Opportunities Commission," Lim said.

Lim further recalled that Najib had then warned Malaysia that failure to undertake a major economic transformation could lead to "the painful possibility of stagnation".

"Has he now abandoned the entire NEM with regard to a needs-and-merit-based transformation of the affirmative programme, to promote building of capacity and capability, focusing on the low income 40% of the households?" Lim added. – September 16, 2013.

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