

**Tian Chua: Future PM must be loyal to reforms, not individuals**  
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**By Minderjeet Kaur**

**PKR vice-president says the opposition does not want to create a new Umno which backs a leader in the name of loyalty.**

PETALING JAYA: PKR vice-president Tian Chua says there will be no conflict within Pakatan Harapan over the post of prime minister if the opposition wins the coming general election (GE14).

This is because the leader will be chosen based on loyalty towards reforming the country's laws and economy, not loyalty towards individuals.

"It does not matter who in PKR or our partners becomes the prime minister.

"The leader must be loyal to the agenda we are fighting for. He or she must not be chosen just because a party or a person is loyal to an individual," he told FMT.

Tian Chua said they did not want to create a new Umno by backing individuals in the name of loyalty.

"People are worried over whether we will have internal fights. If people are loyal to certain individuals then internal fights are inevitable when two or three ambitious people want to contest for that position.

"But if we as a team are committed to the agenda, then we will say whoever is picked for the post must carry out the agenda. If the person fails, the next person must come in."

He was responding to recent reports of struggles within the opposition coalition over its leadership lineup.

PPBM chairman Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been touted as the best candidate for prime minister against PKR's consistent support for its jailed leader Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar recently withdrew as the opposition's de facto candidate to avoid internal strife over who should be prime minister if Pakatan Harapan triumphs in GE14.

Tian Chua said PKR members were loyal to Anwar because of the reforms he championed.

"Not loyal in the way that he has to be the prime minister," he added.

“That is the downfall of the government. People are loyal to Najib Razak. Loyalty to Anwar stands for loyalty to his agenda and what he has been fighting for.”

Reforms PM candidate should fight for

The Batu MP listed some of the reforms the opposition’s prime ministerial candidate should be upholding.

First up are economic reforms. He said this was because many financial problems stemmed from mismanagement and corruption.

“It must be handled with the utmost priority. Without solving this, the rest of the issues will not follow through.”

Secondly, he said, reform was necessary in any institution linked to the economy.

For instance, he said, people such as hawkers had previously seen the judiciary as having no connection to them.

He said the general mindset was “I am just a street hawker and I am just trying to survive. Whether the government appoints or sacks a judge has nothing to do with me”.

“But now, people have realised that the judiciary, Bank Negara, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the Election Commission (EC) have an impact on every individual,” he said.

He gave the example of the 1MDB case in which former Bank Negara governor Zeti Akhtar Aziz had said her hands were tied when it came to taking further action on companies linked to the sovereign wealth fund.

He added that if the attorney-general did not want to charge those guilty of something or other, there was nothing the people could do.

“The person chosen as the new prime minister must agree to having an independent state bank without the interference of politicians.

“Maybe that would help regulate our currency. Investors will be confident that no one is manipulating our forex.

“We are setting an independent probe after two decades. It should have been done a long time ago.”

Tian Chua was referring to a recent announcement by the government on the formation of a Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) on the losses suffered by Bank Negara due to foreign exchange (forex) trading in the 1990s.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said the cabinet had agreed to form the RCI to investigate a reported US\$10 billion in forex market losses incurred during Mahathir's tenure as prime minister.

Tian Chua went on to explain the necessity for freedom of information.

"Ignorant people are the easiest to govern. No one knows where the taxpayers' money goes. There are a lot of repressive and draconian laws that are still governing us which must be removed so that people are not afraid of telling the truth and exposing wrongdoings."

Other issues that the prime ministerial candidate must agree on revamping include education and free healthcare, among others.

"Once we agree on all these things, we must sign and be committed to it and announce it to the public.

"Whoever becomes the prime minister must live out what is pledged so that we can assure the rakyat that it does not matter whether it is Wan Azizah (Wan Ismail) Muhyiddin (Yassin), (Lim) Kit Siang – they must commit to that."

Seat allocation

Tian Chua said Pakatan Harapan, which consists of PKR, DAP, Amanah and PPBM, must actively prepare for elections and avoid three-cornered fights.

"Definitely for a few seats we might not be able to avoid it due to complications with PAS.

"But the majority of the seats, we must negotiate among us. We should not overlap."

He said the best person should be placed to contest and to win the seat.

He added that the parties are in the midst of discussing matters related to seat allocation and preparing the ground for elections.

"The choice of prime minister will come out of this arrangement," he said.

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