

The People's Declaration

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

The People's Mission

1. We, Malaysians of all races and of various faiths, are resolute in our desire for change and are determined to give birth to a system of governance, built upon the fundamental, spiritual and ethical values that are part of the teachings of all the great religions, that:

- is honest, dynamic and truly accountable;
- has a truly democratic parliamentary system that represents the interests of the people;
- has truly independent and clean judicial institutions;
- has a police force which is professional and executes its duties in a just and fair manner, according to the tenets of law;
- has a mass media that is free and not beholden to those in power;
- values accountability and transparency as its fundamental elements;
- respects differences of views; and
- supports a dynamic, resilient and just economy which is also internationally competitive.

2. We, Malaysians of all races and of various faiths, pledge to uphold at all times the foundational principles of the Malaysian Constitution, namely:

- the supremacy of the Constitution over all other laws;
- the Yang DiPertuan Agong as the Constitutional Monarch;
- the separation of the powers of government and in particular the independence of the judiciary;
- that fundamental liberties and freedoms guaranteed to the rakyat shall not be interfered with, denied, or rendered illusory;
- one man, one vote, both of equal value;

- that Islam is the religion of the Federation, and all other religions shall be practiced in peace and harmony;
- Bahasa Melayu as the national language, whilst safeguarding the unfettered right to use and learn other languages;
- the special position of the Malays and the indigenous rakyat of West Malaysia, of Sabah and Sarawak, and the legitimate rights of all other races; and
- A federal administrative system that fulfills its responsibilities, and protection and respect for the special position of Sabah and Sarawak.

3. We, Malaysians of all races and of various faiths, pledge to collectively :

- work to create a just and prosperous Malaysian nation based on a truly democratic system of government;
- protect and defend the rights and dignity of all the people and guarantee justice for all;
- act to enhance economic prosperity through greater productivity, efficiency, and sound economic management in order to enable the country to face global challenges;
- channel the country's resources not only to meet the basic needs of the people but, more importantly, to ensure that the quality of life and social harmony are enhanced;
- distribute wealth and opportunities fairly among all; and
- develop quality social infrastructure and a clean and comfortable physical environment; enhance the quality of education, health and other social services; build mosques and other places of worship; build public parks and libraries; build arts and cultural centres; and provide the widest opportunities for information technology and other methods of communication.

The People's Plan

1. We will initiate measures towards a democratic, transparent, accountable and ethical system of government that will provide the environment for a strong and sustainable economic recovery, for social harmony and prosperity, and justice and equality for all. To that end, we will institute measures to:
 - promote national unity;
 - build a genuine democracy;

- enhance administrative transparency and accountability;
- strengthen the national economy; and
- give full effect to our social contract.

A. Promote National Unity

1. We will initiate measures to build and foster unity among the various ethnic and religious groups, having as our aim the evolution of a people with the common aspiration of justice and equality for all. To that end, we will :

- immediately dismantle any and all remaining practices of “divide and rule” in public administration from the days of the BN administration;
- cause to be established a Ministry in charge of Non-Islamic Religious Affairs;
- put in place an affirmative action programme at Federal and all State levels to eradicate poverty and marginalization from amongst the weak and backward groups irrespective of race, social background and religion;
- pay special attention to the Orang Asli in the Peninsula and all the indigenous groups in Sabah and Sarawak, and amend various laws and regulations pertaining to them so that justice is served, including establishing a Commission to protect Native Customary Rights (NCR) land and to resolve disputes relating to such lands while respecting their traditions and customs;
- strengthen national integration by restoring the rights and privileges that were promised to the people of Sabah and Sarawak;
- establish an independent Ethnic Relations Council, reporting directly to Parliament to help in building a united Bangsa Malaysia;
- establish a Commission for Shari’ah Law at the Federal level;
- reduce the influence of party politics in the respective State Religious Councils, mosques and other religious institutions;
- allocate land for graves and places of worship for all faiths without any discrimination;
- increase inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogues to strengthen mutual understanding among the people; and
- encourage the development of a Malaysian culture based on common moral values and ideals. This requires an open attitude towards the diversity of cultures of the various ethnic and sub-ethnic groups in the country, taking account of the country’s history and evolution.

B. Build A Genuine Democracy

1. Genuine democracy must provide meaningful space for the people to express their views and to participate in various processes of daily administration and not merely to voting once in five years. All interest groups must be allowed to present and debate their views. Information will be freely available subject to strictly defined restrictions. To that end, we will :
 - repeal the Internal Security Act and all laws that presently permit detention without trial;
 - form an Independent Commission to consider if any form of preventive detention laws are necessary and, if thought so, to draft a bill to provide for the same and the necessary checks and balances;
 - form an Independent Commission to review all acts and laws (such as the Official Secrets Act, Sedition Act, Police Act, University and University Colleges Act, Printing Presses and Publications Act, etc.), with the objective of repealing whatever that violates basic human rights;
 - take the necessary measures to ensure and safeguard the freedom of the press and the rights of peaceful assembly, expression and organisation, by amending the appropriate acts and laws and RTM will be corporatised and subject to an independent Broadcasting Commission;
 - ensure that the Human Rights Commission is independent and has representation from all major groups;
 - formulate a Freedom of Information Act to guarantee transparency and free flow of information from the government to the people;
 - to pass the necessary legislation to provide for local council elections;
 - so as to allow for more certainty in the electoral process, thereby affording to all parties participating in that process the most equitable opportunity to make preparation for the same and to remove any and all elements of surprise, make all necessary amendments to the law so that the date of dissolution of Parliament and general elections following thereafter shall respectively occur and be held every 5 years on a date or within a fixed period stipulated by law;
 - review and, where necessary, revise all previous re-delineation of constituencies so as to ensure that differences in the number of registered voters in any two constituencies shall not exceed 20%;
 - enact a law to protect “whistle-blowers” of official misconduct and corruption;
 - sign and ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

- improve the quality and effectiveness of human rights education at all levels of education and institutions of higher learning as well as training centres for public servants; and
- improve prison administration and conditions in line with international standards.

C. Enhance Administrative Transparency & Accountability

1. The need for more transparent governance is pressing. Transparency and accountability must be integrated into all aspects of administration, without damaging efficiency. We will work towards the decentralization of power to the local level so that state governments will be more involved in their respective states' development. To that end, we will :

- establish a Royal Commission to review the judiciary and legal administration in the country, and to recommend proposals to enhance the independence of the judiciary, to regulate appointment and sacking of judges and to end abuse of the law on contempt of court;
- strengthen the authority of Parliament by a system of all-party permanent committees with the power to name the Attorney General, the Chief Justice and other judges, the Inspector General of Police, the Governor of Bank Negara, who will be appointed by the Yang diPertuan Agong according to the Constitution;
- limit the term of office of the Prime Minister, the Menteri Besar and Chief Minister to two terms;
- guarantee freedom of the press so that they can monitor and expose any corruption and abuse of power;
- implement effectively all existing laws that presently require a public hearing before any project is implemented or any regulation amended, such as the Environmental Protection Act, property re-valuation, and so forth;
- review the method of appointing members to the Senate with the objective of introducing a method which reflects the interests of all the people;
- re-introduce elections for local government so that local leaders can be made accountable;
- introduce an ombudsman system for a more independent and effective public complaints body;

- protect by law any individual or group that exposes mismanagement, abuse of power and corruption especially at the highest levels;
- make the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) an independent body protected by the Constitution and directly responsible to Parliament, and headed by a prominent person of standing;
- make compulsory annual public declaration of assets by the people's representatives;
- enhance the independence and authority of the Elections Commission by giving full power to Parliament to appoint the Chairman and other members of the Commission through a process of open hearing;
- clean up the voter register so that it is free from "phantom" voters, "overlapping" voters and foreign citizens;
- reduce the voting age for Malaysian citizens to 18 years and introduce automatic registration for all citizens;
- abolish postal balloting;
- restore the image and status of the Royal Malaysian Police by means of a permanent committee as the Police Commission to receive and consider petitions by the people on police behaviour;
- introduce legislation so that the Attorney General will no longer be a voting member of the Pardon's Board, but will only act as advisor and resource person to the board;
- separate the lower judiciary from the legal services so that they are not both controlled by the Attorney General;
- strengthen the system of checks and balances by amending all laws, such as the Printing and Publication Act etc., that presently deny the power for judicial review;
- review the position, administration and implementation of the Shari'ah laws to guarantee that justice is implemented and the beliefs of the Muslims are protected;
- restore the integrity of the public services, by fully utilising its expertise and experience;
- recognise members of the public services as equal partners in the effort to develop the country;

- institute public sector reforms to raise efficiency and improve morale, work ethics, and working conditions within the public sector;
- attempt to abolish the gap in service conditions between the public and private sectors, especially among those who have equal qualifications and carry out similar functions;
- narrow the salary gap between the highest, medium and lower levels to set an example to the private sector; and
- encourage members of the public services to a renewed determination to serve the people and country, and not the political leaders.

D. Strengthen The National Economy

(1) Reducing the people's burden

(a) Reduce the tax burden

- Raise the level of personal income tax exemption, in addition to increasing child allowance to a reasonable level;
- Raise the level of personal income tax deduction for wives who are full-time home makers in recognition of their important contribution;
- Raise the level of service tax exemption to a turnover exceeding one million ringgit a year;
- Review the tax system with the objective of strengthening government revenues while reducing the tax burden on the people, especially the low- and middle-income groups.

(b) Eradicate absolute poverty

- Eradicate absolute poverty by the middle of the next parliamentary term;
- Reduce poverty levels in the next parliamentary term to half the levels of 1999;
- Improve poverty eradication programmes so that they are free from political interference and truly help the poor;
- Streamline various existing poverty eradication programmes;

- Narrow the income and wealth gap without infringing on legitimate rights.

(c) Assist petty traders and hawkers

- End the practice of using the licensing of small traders and hawkers as a source of revenue and as a party political tool, and instead use it purely for management and regulatory purposes to safeguard the well-being and health of the people, small traders and hawkers;
- Provide comfortable, clean and attractive infrastructure and facilities for hawkers.

(d) Improve public transport services

- Improve the quality of public transport and reduce fares to a level commensurate with the people's living standards;
- Issue taxi permits to individual entrepreneurs and their cooperatives, rather than to large companies;
- Enhance the efficiency and quality of taxi services by private entrepreneurs through the establishment of cooperatives, associations, councils and the like;
- Reduce the fares of domestic flights between Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah and Sarawak to promote national unity and domestic tourism;
- Modernise and enhance rail services in Peninsular Malaysia;
- Develop the road system in Sabah and Sarawak;
- Provide suitable facilities and regulations to reduce road accidents and enhance public road safety;
- Study the possibility of new forms of public transport in the main towns to improve the quality of urban life;
- Provide more orderly and reasonably-priced school services bus to reduce the burden on parents.

(2) Just economic growth

(a) enhance domestic demand and productive, not wasteful, domestic investment

- Review the existing regulatory framework and address its weaknesses;

- Enhance private sector corporate governance, transparency and responsibility, and end the abuse of the banking and finance sector;
- Give priority to projects which generate the greatest benefit to the people, projects such as medium and low-cost housing, modernisation of the railway system, road projects in Sabah and Sarawak, and others;
- Halt mega-projects which are wasteful, environmentally destructive and of little or no benefit to the people;
- Enhance economic opportunities for all by giving specific emphasis and appropriate support to groups that are weak, and effective support to local businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Ensure that economic development is equitable and sustainable, and does not threaten social integrity or destroy the environment and natural resources;
- Develop special development programmes for the poor and the low income in traditional villages, new villages and estates so that they are brought into the mainstream of development and provided with better income sources, jobs and title to land;
- Ensure that special privileges are not abused to enrich only a small elite of those in power and their cronies.

(b) strengthen competitiveness, greater geographical dispersal of industry, develop resource based and hi-tech, information- and knowledge-based industries

- Modernise and expand high productivity industries to increase the country's economic competitiveness and to encourage high-value exports;
- Address our technological weaknesses, in particular the technology gap between the backward and the advanced industries;
- Ensure that large projects, including heavy industry projects, are managed in an integrated manner and in line with a practical industrial development master plan;
- Provide incentives and greater support for small and medium-sized industries;

- Encourage, by means of appropriate incentive schemes, further linkages between local, especially small and medium-sized industries, and large international corporations in order to accelerate technology transfer to local industries and increase the use of local inputs;
- Support local entrepreneurs and encourage the upgrading of local skills and human resource capacity;
- Utilise foreign capital, expertise, markets and technology in order to reinforce local economic fundamentals;
- Enhance the role of science and technology by strengthening basic science education and developing appropriate technical training facilities;
- Increase and improve the efficiency of financial allocations and other incentives for scientific and technological research and development.

(c) Strengthening small and medium-sized agriculture and fisheries

- Enhance food production for the security and stability of the country;
- More research in agriculture, particularly in areas of high technology, food crops and the industrial use of agricultural output;
- Protect biodiversity and encourage research in biodiversity conservation and the use of natural products;
- A review of FELDA, FELCRA, RISDA, MAJUJIKAN and other agriculture and fisheries development agencies to improve management and technology use for the benefit of settlers, farmers and fishermen;
- Restructuring government monopolies to become more efficient, effective and market-driven;
- Firm implementation of laws regulating fisheries exclusion zones to protect in-shore fishermen against encroachment by large fishing vessels and trawlers which cause extensive damage to coastal fisheries resources;
- Development of idle land.

(d) Information technology and economy for all

- Speed-up the installation of telecommunications and electricity infrastructure nationwide and seek to reduce usage costs;
- Expand information technology (IT) education in all schools, beginning with primary schools;
- Develop more effective IT appreciation programmes for the general public;
- Launch a “One Village, One IT Centre” programme by giving appropriate incentives to encourage the dissemination of information technology facilities to small towns and rural areas;
- Make compulsory information technology infrastructure planning in all new housing schemes, including low and medium cost housing, and push for the modernisation of the infrastructure in existing housing schemes;
- Negotiate with software manufacturers to obtain cheaper software for the local market.

(e) Prioritising small and medium enterprises

- Establish an investment fund, under-written by the government, for the development of small and medium enterprises and allocated according to performance and not political favouritism.

(f) Reorganising the privatisation policy framework

- Details of privatisation contracts to be made public in the interests of transparency. The interests of consumers and workers, and the rights of the people, will be safeguarded. All future privatisations to be conducted on the basis of competitive bids;
- Ensure that public monopolies do not become private monopolies;
- Basic public facilities and services – such as water, education, health and public housing – will only be corporatised to improve management but will not be privatised;
- Public enterprises that have already been privatised will be monitored closely to safeguard public interests. Enterprises that have been privatised will not be re-nationalised but any invalid contracts can be terminated in the interest of the people and the country;
- Establish an independent commission to audit all large privatised projects in the interests of transparency and accountability.

(g) Strengthening the financial system

- encourage and promote investment and credit facilities to productive sectors and not to speculation;
- rehabilitate the image, prestige and integrity of Bank Negara;
- ensure that Federal expenditure is channeled particularly to enhance the standard of living of the poor, and to interior and rural areas which are still marginalised.

E. Give Full Effect To Our Social Contract

(1) Education

- Education is a fundamental responsibility of the state, although private education is allowed;
- Establish a National Education Consultative Council to ensure that the practice and implementation of the national education policy and philosophy is both effective and just;
- Stop the privatisation of public institutions of higher learning and review the implementation of the corporatisation policy so that it adheres to the principles of education and not financial gain;
- Allocate the education budget in a fair and equitable fashion, without neglecting any group;
- Provide more scholarships and other financial assistance on the basis of need;
- Increase nursery and kindergarten facilities, especially for the lower income group;
- Guarantee access to compulsory and free and compulsory education at the primary and secondary levels;
- Improve standards and facilities for schools in the interior, especially in Sabah and Sarawak;
- Review the schemes of service for teachers and introduce additional incentives for serving in the interior;
- Raise the standard of teacher training for all levels of schools and increase the number of trained teachers according to demand;

- Increase advanced training opportunities for teachers and lecturers so that they are always current in their respective knowledge and skills;
- Strengthen the position of Malay language as *lingua franca* among the people;
- Encourage and develop the Malay language as a dynamic literary and cultural language, which is accepted and used by all communities in Malaysia;
- Recognise the right to study the mother tongue like Chinese, Tamil, Iban, Kadazandusun and others in schools, and improve the implementation of policies on mother tongue education, so that it is more efficient and responsive to the demands of parents. Trained mother tongue language teachers must be supplied by government schools when at least ten students need such teachers, and the training of mother tongue teachers must be improved at teacher training colleges and public institutions of higher learning;
- Retain the various language streams in primary schools while encouraging greater integration among students of different ethnic groups, for example through co-curriculum activities;
- Increase the number of mother tongue schools and upgrade their facilities according to need and demand;
- Improve the teaching and learning of international languages, especially English and Arabic languages;
- Improve the quality of and facilities in primary and secondary religious schools;
- Strengthen the position of the existing public institutions of higher learning and improve their performance;
- Systematically increase the number of public institutions of higher learning without weakening the existing ones, so that more qualified students have access to higher education at minimum fees or for free;
- Guarantee the autonomy and standards of universities and other institutions of higher learning by establishing a Universities Commission as an independent supervisory body, and amend the University and University Colleges Act to ensure the fundamental rights of the academic community, including students;
- Provide an educational television channel to complement formal education and to encourage life-long continuing education, with the help of the private corporate sector as well as public and private educational institutions;

- Widen the scope of the National Accreditation Authority to monitor, investigate and propose recognition of certificates, diplomas and degrees outside the national education system. Degrees from institutions of higher learning in Arabia, Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan, India, Pakistan, China and other countries, and local educational certificates such as the United Independent Schools Examination (UISE) will be considered based upon academic standards.

(2) Health

- Establish a National Health Council, with the objective of protecting the interests of the people and advancing the quality of health;
- Abolish all programmes to privatise the public health system;
- Review the cost and quality of service of all the health support services that have been privatised;
- Increase expenditure allocations for the health sector;
- Restructure the scheme of service for government medical staff to be more commensurate with their work load and responsibility;
- Maintain low cost healthcare services for all the people;
- Establish a commission to study the deficiencies in the existing health system and to make recommendations for improving the public health system;
- Monitor private medical services and check any abuses;
- Establish a national centre for disease control;
- Increase continuing educational and specialist training opportunities for doctors, nurses and laboratory staff;
- Review the possibility of incorporating complementary healthcare methods such as homeopathy and traditional medicine within the Malaysian health system;
- Step up health promotion activities, health education, preventive measures and monitoring of diseases;
- Encourage the greater involvement of women in the health sector, including training more women doctors to handle female patients.

(3) Housing

- Increase the number of good and comfortable low cost houses which meet household space and environmental needs;
- Overcome the “squatter” problem as quickly as possible, preferably through development of housing in situ and/or land sharing;
- Mandate a system of consultations between the “squatters”, developers and the authorities to reach settlement on matters of alternative housing or land or other compensation;
- Provide public facilities around flats to ensure a balanced and healthy personality development;
- Carry out efforts to provide easy and cheap credit facilities to help “squatters” to buy and own their houses.

(4) **Social Services**

- Carry out the responsibility of the government to provide comprehensive social services that are fair and efficient;
- Ensure that every housing project above a particular size provide social facilities, such as playing fields, public recreational clubs, libraries and so forth, for the use of the general public;
- Provide a systematic and comprehensive arrangement to protect and provide assistance to the poor, orphans and single parents;
- Ensure equal opportunities for the disabled to achieve self-improvement, education, careers, social participation and the provision of the necessary facilities to enable them to be independent in all public areas, facilities and buildings.

(5) **Environment**

- Formulate a long term sustainable development policy involving all strata of society, to promote full support from all levels of government, non-governmental organisations, political parties and the public at large;
- Amend the Environmental Protection Act so that no project can be started without the approval of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and the written commitment of the project proponents to implement all provisions for mitigation, as determined by the Department of Environment, with clear procedures for providing

information and for consultations in the Environmental Impact Assessment process involving the main stakeholders;

- Coordinate the environmental protection laws at the state and federal levels so that enforcement and supervision can be more efficient and cost-effective;
- Implement laws relating to the protection of the national heritage, and increase fines for breaching the Environmental Protection Act and laws to protect our natural heritage;
- Ensure that every state gazettes a reasonable number of national parks, conservation parks, sites for new urban centres and housing development areas in its master plan;
- Work towards the standardisation of laws relating to forestry and logging among the various states and establish an independent inspection system to ensure that all these laws are firmly implemented;
- Encourage all the states to immediately gazette sufficient water catchment areas to meet the needs of the future;
- Consult with the state governments so that they implement the existing conservation plans and provide new conservation plans wherever necessary.

(6) Consumerism and Prices

- Strengthen consumer protection laws, especially those relating to price control, cost of services and their quality, particularly during festive seasons;
- Review the Consumer Act so that an independent Tribunal can be established, with participation from non-governmental organisations, to identify the list of necessary products and control price increases by establishing a price index for the purpose;
- Encourage the cooperative movement for production and distribution of necessary goods;
- Encourage consumer organisations to be more active in raising the awareness of consumers regarding their own rights;
- Regulate advertisements so that they will not degrade the dignity of women or other groups.

(7) Workers

- Form a framework of tripartite consultation that is effective, just and democratic, and amend laws relating to labour, trade unions and industrial relations consistent with it;
- Repeal or amend laws which restrict the right of workers to form, participate and be active in trade unions;
- Review and update retrenchment benefits and study the establishment of a national retrenchment fund to help retrenched workers;
- Fix a reasonable minimum monthly wage for daily paid workers;
- Fix a reasonable monthly wage for estate workers and seriously implement a housing scheme for estate workers;
- Provide an example for a five day work week with normal working period of not more than 40 hours a week;
- Review methods of recruitment and pay for foreign workers and reduce dependency on them;
- Recognise the right of trade unions and union leaders to participate in national politics;
- Increase the retirement age to 60 years for the public sector, consistent with the improvement of health and life span;
- Ensure equal pay and benefits for men and women doing equal work or performing similar duties;
- Increase maternity leave in the public sector to 90 days and introduce leave of 7 days for the husband;
- Develop programmes with the private sector for continuing education and training in order to improve flexibility, expertise and productivity of workers;
- Introduce re-training programmes for retrenched workers;
- Review the effectiveness of the National Institute for Work Safety and Health and overcome its deficiencies.

(8) **Women**

- Enforce strictly laws regarding the rights, interests and dignity of women and abolish laws and regulations that discriminate against women;

- Protect the rights and welfare of women who have been abandoned by their husbands without any reasonable support;
- Continue payments of pensions for widows even after they remarry;
- Provide creches within the community and also at places of work;
- Introduce flexible working hours for working women;
- Study the Women's Agenda for Change in order to implement appropriate recommendations therein.

(9) Youth

- Give encouragement and facilities to youths in order to improve their talents in the fields of arts, sports and culture;
- Provide projects aimed especially at discovering leadership talent in individual, cultural, entrepreneurial and social development;
- Overcome problems, such as unemployment, drug abuse, drop-out and moral questions, faced by some youths with innovative methods;
- Provide greater opportunities for youths of different social backgrounds to participate in skills training and in economic projects;
- Provide more effective rehabilitation centres and work opportunities for youths that have become victims of social problems, so that they can be absorbed back into the community.

(10) The elderly and pensioners

- Fix a minimum pension level that will enable pensioners to sustain themselves;
- Encourage pensioners who are still able to work to contribute towards national development;
- Have a half fare system for the elderly and pensioners for all types of public transport;
- Make it obligatory for children or close relatives to look after the aged and support such moves by tax exemptions or some other incentives;
- Ensure that the elderly are given priority to go on the pilgrimage;

- Encourage non-governmental organisations to develop programmes and courses for the elderly and pensioners to improve their talents, develop new skills, participate in study tours; language courses, physical education and so forth.