

# SELANGOR JOURNAL



**How Victory Was Won**

FEATURE 6

**Keeping Promises of Reform**

FEATURE 10

**Hope Of A Nation**

FEATURE 13

**Breath of Fresh Air**

LIFE STYLE 15

**Around Town**

LIFE STYLE 16

BUSINESS 8

## A Farewell to GST

by **Batrisyia Jay**



**W**hen the Tsunami of May 9 gave birth to a new government led by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, one of its first tasks was to announce that the 6% Goods and Services Tax (GST) would be rated 0% effective June 1, 2018.

Pakatan Harapan (PH) stuck to its promise to remove GST and have it replaced with SST (Sales and Service Tax). By 2020, it hopes to be able to completely remove GST.

A major move like this will certainly have an impact not only on the country's financial standing, but on the people too. The income group that stands to benefit the most from the removal of GST is the middle-income group as they are the ones who have to spend the most on household goods and services that do not fall under the zero-rated or GST-exempt categories.

Story continues on **page 4**

BUSINESS 4

## SELANGOR PARAGON OF SUCCESS



The Selangor Pakatan Harapan government under Azmin Ali achieved the impossible; they increased the state's financial reserves to more than RM 4 billion, and attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to the tune of 5.59 billion in 2017 alone while still running modern, effective social assistance programmes in the form of the 42 Inisiatif Peduli Rakyat (IPR).

Story continues on **page 4**

## New traffic flow for Subang

**T**raffic along Persiaran Kewajipan to and from Kompleks 3K to DaMen has been a longstanding issue for residents of Subang Jaya.

As such, MPSJ has been working on a traffic management plan to improvise this stretch of road, reports Subang Jaya assemblywoman Michelle Ng Mei Sze in a recent Facebook post.

“Having researched and consulted experts and stakeholders including KESAS, I would like to inform residents of Subang Jaya that MPSJ will be running a trial for a new traffic management plan at the interchange between Persiaran Kewajipan and Shah Alam Expressway (Kesas) over two months, effective 9 June,” says Michelle.

Michelle reports that northbound vehicles travelling from USJ will not be allowed to turn right onto Kesas to head to Kuala Lumpur. Instead, these vehicles must turn left towards Shah Alam and take the nearby elevated U-turn.

The left-most lane of the four-lane northbound carriageway from USJ 1 to SS14 will be closed to allow smoother traffic flow.

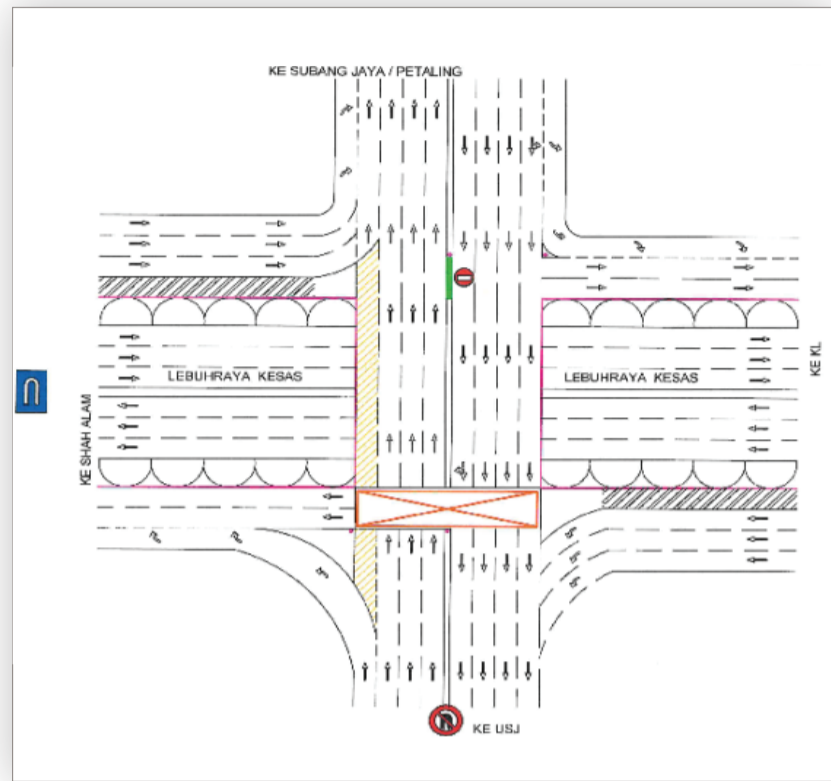
“Southbound motorists will no longer be allowed to make a U-turn at the traffic light in front of Da Men shopping mall. Motorists from Kuala Lumpur who are headed to SS14 must instead go past the interchange, take the elevated U-turn and exit Kesas via the slip road,” says Michelle.

“I am aware of a longer route that some of us might

have to take. Hence in the next two months from 9 June onwards, I encourage Persiaran Kewajipan users to ask whether their overall travel time has been shortened after sufficient time has been given for drivers to get used to the new traffic.”

Michelle expresses that if it has, this will be a short term pain for a long term gain. Meanwhile, if it hasn't tempered with the driver's travel time, then Subang would have at least exhausted an option in trying to resolve this issue, adding that it really is only a matter of coming up with another solution to the problem.

“This was not a decision reached in haste. I would need all of Subang to work together to solve this. Thank you in advance, Subang.”



## Singapore working closely on 1MDB

**O**fficers from the AGC, CAD and MAS met the Malaysian 1MDB Taskforce led by Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail in Singapore on 8 June, 2018.

The meeting was held at the invitation of the Singapore authorities, following an earlier meeting with the Taskforce last week in Kuala Lumpur.

“It was a productive meeting, with a fruitful exchange of information. Singapore has been providing Malaysia information on 1MDB-related fund flows, since March 2015, and this was acknowledged by Malaysia,” the statement reports, adding that both sides has agreed to continue this cooperation.

The officers says that they have received media queries on the issuance of INTERPOL Red Notices.

“Singapore law enforcement and regulatory agencies have been actively investigating possible money-laundering and other offences pertaining to 1MDB-related fund flows, starting in March 2015.”

Following investigations, the Singapore authorities issued warrants of arrest in April/May 2016 and at Singapore's request, INTERPOL published Red Notices in October 2016, for Low Taek Jho and Tan Kim Loong, who are suspected to have committed offences in Singapore and cannot be located here.

All members of INTERPOL, including Malaysia, would have been aware of the Red Notices when they were published.

The statement reports that Singapore does not tolerate the use of its financial system as a refuge or conduit for illicit funds.

“We have taken strong action against financial institutions and individuals who have broken laws within our jurisdiction in connection with 1MDB-related fund flows, including criminal charges and convictions, as well as large financial penalties.”

Investigations are continuing into several other individuals suspected of being involved in 1MDB-related offences in Singapore.

SELANGOR  
JOURNAL  
Editorial  
Team

ADVISOR  
Editorial Advisory Board, CCSB

CHIEF EDITOR  
Cecelia Alphonsus

MANAGING EDITOR  
Ameena Siddiqi

WRITER  
Batrisyia Jay

Aras 2, Carlton Holiday Hotel & Suite, No 1, Persiaran Akuatik 13/43  
Seksyen 13, 40100, Shah Alam, Selangor

Tel 03-5523 4856 Fax 03-5523 5856  
Email [info@mediaselangor.com](mailto:info@mediaselangor.com)



“Democracy must be built through open societies that share information. When there is information, there is enlightenment. When there is debate, there are solutions. When there is no sharing of power, no rule of law, no accountability, there is abuse, corruption, subjugation and indignation.”

Atifete Jahjaga



# Perangsang Selangor bags Asia's Responsible Enterprise Award

**K**umpulan Perangsang Selangor Berhad (Perangsang Selangor) was named recipient of the Asia Responsible Enterprise Awards (AREA) 2018 under the Health Promotion category on 1 June, 2018 in Manila, Philippines.

The awards which were organised by Enterprise Asia, the leading non-governmental association for entrepreneurship, had selected fifty-one corporate social programmes and leaders across Asia as the recipients of the AREA 2018.

"Perangsang Selangor is extremely pleased to be recognised by AREA as recipient of the award for year 2018. The award is the fifth achievement under our Corporate Social Responsibility initiative, two for social empowerment and engagement and three for 'Sports for All' programme," said Suzila Khairuddin, Chief Operating Officer of Perangsang Selangor.

According to Suzila, Perang-

sang Selangor has been recently conferred as winner of the 'Jury Award' by Selangor Sports Council and named as top 10 in Asia for the 'Best Sports CSR initiative of the Year' category by Asia Sports Industry Awards in 2017.

"Our mission under the 'Sports for All' programme is to enhance the quality of life among the underprivileged, disabled and rural society in Selangor by providing knowledge and opportunity to be involved in sports as well as producing potential champions for the state or country," Suzila expressed, adding that more than 10,000 participants were involved in the programme with 90 events implemented across the state of Selangor last year.

Over 200 submissions from 14 countries were received from companies across Asia, with judges led by Ambassador-at-Large of Taiwan and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Environment of

Taiwan, Dr Eugene Chien, sifting through the submissions over a three-month judging period.

Apart from being able to demonstrate the design and execution of sound and effective CSR programmes, nominees were also required to demonstrate the extent that CSR practises have been institutionalised within their organisations and the measurable impact of their programmes to people, community and environment.

The awards ensures that Asian businesses are honoured for championing sustainable and responsible business practices, demonstrating companies' leadership, sincerity and on-going commitment in incorporating responsible and ethical values, compliance, investment in stakeholders, involvement in communities and protection of the environment into the way they run their businesses.



# Selangor Paragon of Success

Continued from cover page...

Last year alone Selangor secured RM5.59 billion worth of direct investments with 202 approved manufacturing projects, while the services sector garnered RM4 billions of investments, largely contributed by IKEA's distribution facility for the Asia Pacific region slated for development in Pulau Indah.

## People's Leader

Needless to say the appointment of Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali to join the leadership in Putrajaya was a surprising yet highly anticipated move. Having served more than 15 years as a Selangor state assemblyman, and four years as Menteri Besar, his move to Putrajaya as Minister of Economic Affairs brings with it a certainty of leadership and an assurance of good governance.

Azmin Ali is a man who to a certain extent has proven his mettle as he navigated Selangor to Malaysia's most developed and progressive state, a modern state with the wellbeing of the people at the centre of his policies. Chances are he will bring these same pragmatic and successful policies to national level.

Azmin's thrusts have always been to empower Selangorians from all walks of life. Building on a stable economic growth, the Selangor Menteri Besar has made good on his promise to walk the talk by 'Inisiatif Peduli Rakyat' policies. Commonly known as IPR, these initiatives are a series of commitments by the state government to ensure the wellbeing of the Selangor people.

Selangor's economic success is due to good governance and people-centric policies has made it a model for the future of Malaysia.

When appointed to the position of Minister of Economic Affairs Azmin remarked "I realise that I also have a huge responsibility to Malaysia and Malaysians, as a whole I accept this trust and responsibility with a sense of awareness to implement economic reformation in order to save the country from crisis caused by the confusing

policies of the previous administration. I am also determined to ensure there is social justice in which the country's wealth is distributed fairly and equally." This has always been at the heart of his policies in Selangor.

Appointed as Menteri Besar in September 2014, during a tumultuous period, Azmin Ali's stellar leadership of transparency, accountability and determination lead Pakatan Harapan to win 51 out of 56 State seats in the 2018 General Elections. The result was seen as a form of affirmation of the current government in fulfilling its promises.

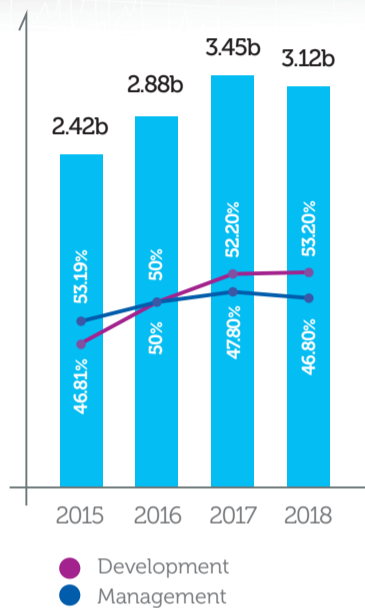
Selangor State government senior executive councillor Datuk Teng Chang Khim said the state's investment market is expected to perform better this year due to encouraging international investors' confidence.

"Overall, Azmin Ali has left his trademark here in Selangor. He has been proven to be a successful leader, who is both meticulous and knowledgeable in the development of the economy. We have developed good working relationships with both foreign and local governments even though we were an opposition led state. We believe the market is better than last year, even with the slight disruption from the General Elections."

## Selangor Economy

Transformational change in Selangor has been marked by significant shifts in strategic thrusts specifically in the context of driving the economy of the state forward. In his book, "Propelling Selangor's Transformation Into A Regional Smart State." by Professor Dr. Mohd Faiz Abdullah, he writes that pursuant to Azmin Ali's clarion call for paradigm change, greater focus and emphasis is given to high impact and high-tech industries, namely, aerospace, future commerce, services and biotechnology.

The aerospace industry alone is an apex industry driving innovation and technology in economic development. More than 62% of the nation's aerospace activities are located



Selangor yearly development and management budget

in Selangor, which means that the state can leverage on its incremental critical mass.

Commenting recently Azmin Ali said the mid-term review on the state of the economy, scheduled to be tabled in September, will lead to a new economic direction for the country in line with Pakatan Harapan's (PH) manifesto.

"This time, the mid-term review is rather different as we will not only review the achievements under the 11th Malaysia Plan over the last two years, but also set new targets based on PH's promises." Adding that "the main reason the PH federal government was elected was to ensure that the cost of living remains low."

One thing for certain is that continued successes by our new government in keeping its election promises and good governance will help safeguard our credit ratings and slowly but surely improve foreign investors' perception of Malaysia while attracting them back onto Malaysian shores.

If the Selangor experience is anything to go by, the public can rest assured that with him in Putrajaya persistent good governance, transparency and accountability of our respective institutions will result in a more stable and vibrant Malaysian economy.

“

Selangor is close to my heart. I am touched by the requests made openly through social media for me to continue helping Selangor. Believe me, I will continue to be with the people of Selangor as we continue to bring success, harmony and peace to the state,

”

Azmin Ali

*\*At the time of writing, Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali still holds the portfolio of Menteri Besar of Selangor and Minister of Economic Affairs*

Invest Selangor Bhd is aiming to bring in a total of RM12 billion investment this year (2018), from the services and manufacturing sectors. Of the total, RM7 billion worth of investments is expected to come from the manufacturing sector, while RM5 billion will come from the services sector.

Last year in 2017, Selangor attracted RM5.59 billion of direct investments in the manufacturing sector, as well as RM4 billion in the services sector, mainly from the world's largest furniture retailer, IKEA, establishing a regional supply chain centre in Pulau Indah, worth RM908 million. The services and manufacturing sectors contributed 59.5% and 29.5% to Selangor's gross domestic product in 2017 respectively.



**China**  
5 projects worth RM282 million



**Japan**  
13 projects worth RM533 million



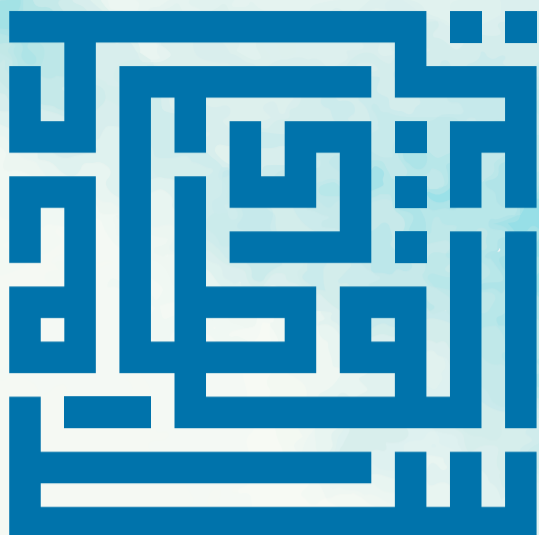
This year, Selangor has garnered about **RM1.8 billion of investments to date**

**Singapore**  
18 projects at RM439 million

**Total Investment**

■ 40% Foreign Investment  
■ 60% Local Investment

Selangor, dubbed as the golden state of Malaysia, remained the main contributor to the national economy in 2016, with a 22.7% share, ahead of Kuala Lumpur (15.3%), Sarawak (9.8%), Johor (9.4%), Pulau Pinang (6.7%) and Sabah (6.7%).



**MAJLIS RUMAH TERBUKA  
HARI RAYA EIDUL FITR  
PERINGKAT NEGERI SELANGOR 2018**

**24 JUN 2018 (AHAD)**

**10 SYAWAL 1439H**

**10.20 PAGI - 3.00 PETANG**

**PADANG B, DATARAN KEMERDEKAAN  
SHAH ALAM**

***GELOMBANG PERPADUAN***

***RANCAK PEMBANGUNAN***

***SEMARAK KESEJAHTERAAN***

**SEMUA DIJEMPUT HADIR**



# HOW VICTORY WAS WON

by

**Ibrahim Suffian**  
Programs Director,  
Merdeka Center for  
Opinion Research



**T**he blue flags emblazoned with the scale of justice hang limply in the humid air. Speeding cars drive by ragged remnants of blue banners and flags strewn by the roadside - relics of the watershed Malaysian elections on May 9th 2018. Life moves on, unrelenting into the future. Many analysts, including this writer, were blindsided by what happened.

While some may have claimed to foretell the future a month ago, the surveys of all organizations showed that a significant proportion, as many as one-third, of Malaysians refused to disclose their choices to pollsters and politicians alike, preferring to say they were “undecided”. This is amply evident in the many polls produced by various organizations leading to election day. The truth is, voting for the Opposition, particularly among Malay voters, was something one does not speak about openly, for fear of losing practical benefits, privileges or even friendships. This can be explained by the “spiral of silence theory” which speaks of the tendency of people to not openly express views or opinions they feel are divergent from the community they belong to.

Now in the wake of the event, we are left to figure out what went through the minds of millions of voters that day - relying on preexisting research, countries with similar political contexts, as well as analyzing the raw results from the election.

Detailed data that would shed light on how Malaysians decided may not be available for many more weeks and would then require careful analysis that seeks to reveal how people from different ethnicities, sub-regions, age groups and income strata made up their minds. Yet ample information exist from work already done to explain how the sentiments turned to a silent revolution that overturned a six decade long dominant party and turned it into opposition overnight.

Some have postulated the outcome of the election on one or two critical factors, citing public backlash over the Goods and Services Tax or the 1MDB scandal. That alone does not explain the near perfect storm that terminated Barisan Nasional’s hold on power. While reform hungry Malaysians and supporters of Pakatan Harapan were right to celebrate their years of toil upon reaching victory, this journey resembles



Yet ample information exist from work already done to explain how the sentiments turned to a silent revolution that overturned a six decade long dominant party and turned it into opposition overnight



that of other peoples who have toppled decades of dominant political parties such as the People’s Revolutionary Institution in Mexico, the Grand National Party in South Korea, the Kuomintang in Taiwan, and Golkar in Indonesia.

There are at least six critical factors that led to the result. The first three are embedded in our political system. Regular elections, which have conducted here since 1955, have served as a source of mandate and validation of the party holding power -- the Alliance, then expanded and renamed Barisan Nasional -- since Independence. These periodic events, though flawed and unfair to the then Opposition, became part of the national political culture. Second was the continuous presence of Opposition parties, though usually weak and inhabiting the fringes of the political spectrum, they were a source of potential competition for the ruling party. Third was the pragmatism among the Opposition parties to cooperate in order to maximize the votes – an uphill task in Malaysia’s heavily gerrymandered, first past the post system – yet coalitions or electoral pacts among opposition parties had been a feature in our elections since 1964, such when the Socialist Front was formed to challenge the then Alliance, or the unnamed electoral pact

**Ibrahim Suffian is a co-founder and programs director of Merdeka Center for Opinion Research, a leading public opinion polling and political surveys organization in Malaysia.**



### Achieving the Tipping Point – the Leadership Factor

In Mexico, it was Vicente Fox, in the former Czechoslovakia, Vaclav Havel, in the case of Malaysia, it needed not one but two charismatic leaders to cement a coalition that was strong enough to challenge the dominant ruling party. Both led splinter groups that left Barisan Nasional to form new parties that cooperated with existing political parties. In 1999, the then jailed Anwar Ibrahim formed a pact that eventually broke the Barisan Nasional's two-thirds supermajority. It needed another splintering of the ruling party before the final blow could be delivered. Former premier and strongman Dr Mahathir Mohamed quit UMNO in February 2016 and formed a new party later in the same year, joining the preexisting Pakatan Harapan coalition.

The fifth factor was a slew of critical issues that caused widespread dissatisfaction with Barisan Nasional. The removal of subsidies in late 2013, the introduction of the Good and Services Tax in April 2015, and finally the sordid details emerging from the 1MDB scandal, all taking place when a large majority of Malaysians felt squeezed between stagnant wages and rising costs. These issues had eroded support for BN since late 2013, but the Opposition was unable to make headway among more conservative, BN-leaning voters, as seen in the 2016 Sarawak state elections and two by-elections, in Kuala Kangsar and Sungai Besar, that same year. Our data from mid-2015 onwards showed Barisan Nasional appeared to make some gradual recovery as can be seen in the chart below. While the Opposition had been articulating various populist promises and criticism of BN failings before, none had the impact as when it was articulated by the former premier, particularly among the Malay swing voters that was needed to cross the line. Seen in this context, the data suggest that Dr. Mahathir's leadership factor was critical in lending legitimacy and credibility to the solutions proposed.

Leadership allows for complex issues and concepts to transcend barriers, so it could be understood by the masses. It works both ways for good and bad leaders. Barisan Nasional and Najib Razak's problems began when Dr Mahathir began articulating his criticism in the characteristic straight talking fashion he is well known for.

in 1969 among nearly all of the Opposition parties which took two states from the Alliance, as well as garnering nearly one-half of the popular vote.

Yet it took a fourth factor – the consistent pressure for election reform that achieved the first breakthrough in 2008. Tentative efforts by the BERSIH coalition of civil society organizations and their allies in the Opposition to demand more transparency in the conduct of elections by the Elections Commission managed to gain popular support by the mobilization of a number of large rallies, the first in late 2007.

These initial steps delivered modest improvements – transparent plexiglass ballot boxes and the counting of ballot papers at the polling room (rather than being transported to a centralized counting center), and eventually, in 2013 the use of indelible ink to prevent repeat voting. Groups such as BERSIH and independent media organizations served as a critical force in awakening ordinary Malaysians to the power of the vote, which when coupled with technology and knowledge connected people with one another in a manner that left them invested in the political process. It soon became not just another election, but a sacred ritual to determine the path to be taken by the nation.

Eschewing complex vocabulary, Mahathir called Najib a 'thief' rather than a kleptocrat. More critically, Mahathir helped ordinary, conservative and nationalistic oriented Malay Muslim voters overcome their fear of voting the Opposition – perhaps, just enough to make the numbers to win the election that night. Najib on the hand, resorted to ridiculing his opponent for being in politics again at the age of 92. This generated more sympathy for Mahathir rather than diminish his appeal.

Our survey data from the days leading to the election showed that a significant number of Malay voters began to set aside the importance they held for "preservation of Malay rights" and moved towards choosing "having a competent national leadership" during the course of the 11-day election campaign. This is significant because it meant Barisan Nasional's primary appeal to its core Malay base had become

eroded. In our view, this was the crucial factor that enabled PH to achieve the tipping point among Malay voters – their trust in Dr. Mahathir's leadership.

Finally, the outcome would not be complete if not for a few last minute own goals by Barisan Nasional that enraged the voting public – all of which took place in weeks and days leading to election day: the gerrymandering proposal, a law on "Fake News", the Registrar of Societies disbanding of Dr Mahathir's party, calling a mid-week election day ostensibly to depress voter turnout, and promising tax relief for young voters and increase in cash handouts – all probably pushed undecided voters to the brink and brought them out in droves early in the day.

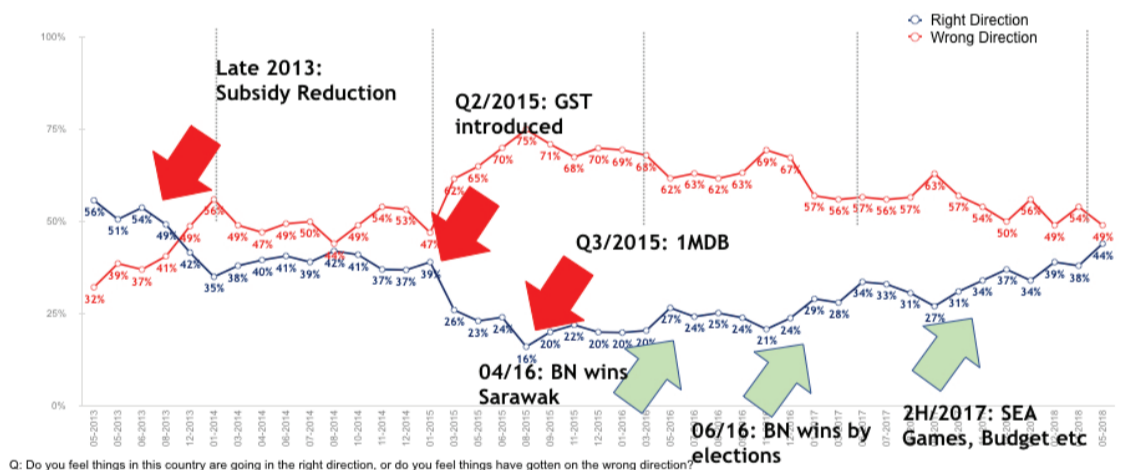
One self-inflicted factor however deserves special mention – James Masing's dismissal of several senior Parti Rakyat Sarawak leaders in late April

2018 created a voter revolt in the Bidayuh and Iban areas within lower Sarawak, along with internal problems in other parties delivered eight unanticipated parliamentary seats to Pakatan Harapan, thus allowing for the coalition to have a sizeable enough majority to form a stable federal government.

May 9th 2018 was the culmination of the efforts of many groups and individuals who, for the hardships and sacrifices they endured, deserve to be called patriots. It was many factors both pushing and pulling towards the outcome, none could do without the other. Winning the battle over Barisan Nasional was one challenge, our hope is that this victory will be translated into tough but meaningful, sustainable, systemic reforms that mark the beginning of a democratic and inclusive political order – one that unleashes the true potential of Malaysia – its diverse talent and cultural capital.

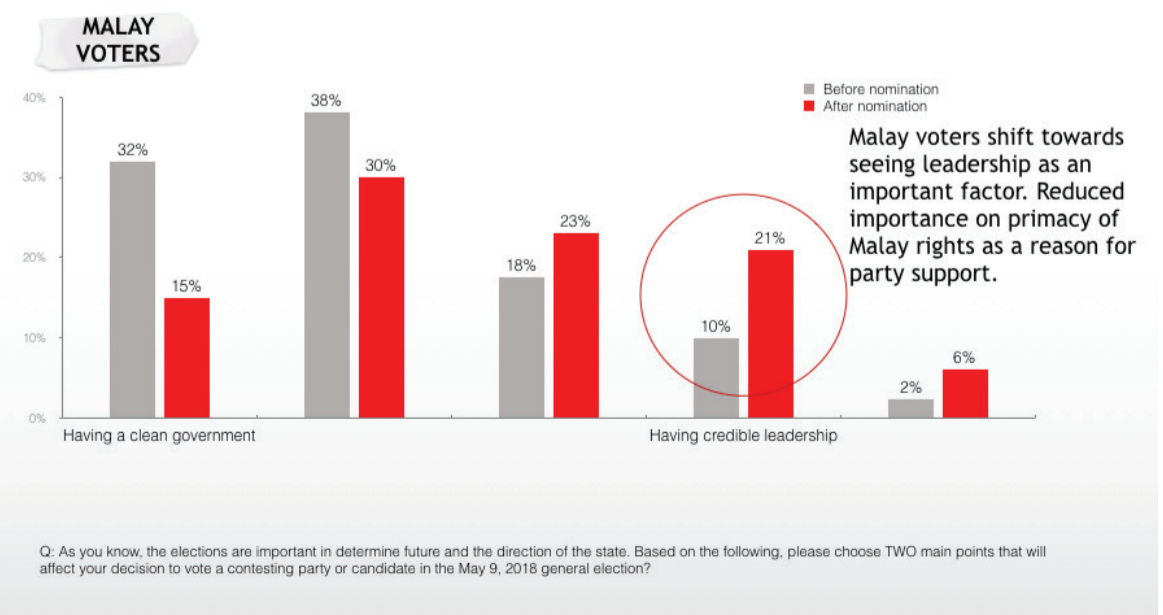
FIGURE 1. DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

Right versus Wrong direction



Q: Do you feel things in this country are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten on the wrong direction?

FIGURE 2. FACTORS INFLUENCING VOTING CHOICE



Q: As you know, the elections are important in determine future and the direction of the state. Based on the following, please choose TWO main points that will affect your decision to vote a contesting party or candidate in the May 9, 2018 general election?

Malay voters shift towards seeing leadership as an important factor. Reduced importance on primacy of Malay rights as a reason for party support.

Continued from cover page...

When GST was first implemented in 2013, high prices were not expected, according to then secretary-general of the Ministry of Finance Tan Sri Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah, "Prices of some goods may rise, but this should go down later on. Hopefully, this is a one-time spike, after that it will moderate downwards." That certainly didn't happen and since GST was implemented, prices were on a rise while salary growth remained stagnant.

### ■ GST – A brief history

Introduced on April 1, 2015, the GST was to supplant the then existing Sales and Services Tax (SST) in Malaysia. The former government proclaimed that the GST was meant as an additional income for the government, seeing that they were solely dependent on the revenue mustered from PETRONAS (Petroleum National Berhad), Malaysia's state-owned oil company.

While it might seem to be the best choice to salvage the economy, considering the apparent drop in petroleum revenue, it was to say the least very unpopular amongst Malaysian. Hence, its current abolition is seen by many as a positive impact for the people.

However, Moody's Investors Service had announced since that Malaysia's plan of abolishing the GST will be "credit negative", seeing that the government will be again heavily relying on oil-related revenue.

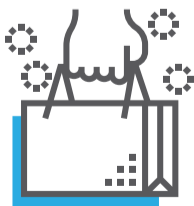
Unless the government introduces other offsetting measures over the next two years, the removal of GST will have a net negative effect on government revenue, even accounting for some budgetary cushion from higher oil prices, the credit rating agency said.

### ■ Impact on the economy



#### ■ Ease Inflation

The removal of GST will bring positive changes to the economy as it is supposed to ease rising inflation. When GST was introduced in April 2015, it caused the inflation rate to hike to 4.2%. This was in part due to profiteers taking advantage of the new system to indiscriminately increase the prices of goods and services.



#### ■ Increase consumer spending

The removal is predicted to create an increase in consumer spending, therefore boosting the economy overall. Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) has forecast that the economy will grow 6% in 2018.



# A Farewell to GST



#### ■ Oil revenue to offset

Malaysia being one of the largest oil and natural energy producers in the Asia-Pacific region is set to benefit from crude oil prices trading up to a new high of roughly RM314 per barrel, this will partly offset any loss in revenue. Tan Sri Dato' Sri Dr. Ungku Zeti Akhtar Aziz, who is part of the Team of Eminent Persons to advise the new government, said that Malaysia can reduce fiscal deficit by controlling expenditure.



#### ■ Review, defer or renegotiate

The Finance Ministry is confident there will not be any problem even with the GST removed as the government plans to review, defer or renegotiate at least RM10 billion worth of projects.



#### ■ Additional income

The federal government will be getting an estimated RM14.4 billion in additional income this year, including from higher corporate and petroleum income taxes from oil firms on the back of higher oil prices (RM5.4 billion) and higher dividends from government-linked companies like Khazanah Nasional and Petronas (RM5 billion).

Out of the RM14.4 billion estimated, SST is expected to contribute RM4 billion this year after its implementation in September.

Despite the GST removal, the extra income, review of projects and the stabilization of fuel prices the government expects to only see its budget deficit increase from the original projected RM39.8 billion to RM40.1 billion.

### ■ Was GST evil?

160 countries have adopted the GST/VAT, and GST has been instrumental in providing the government with more revenue than SST did. It was estimated that RM43.8bil was to be collected in 2018 from GST as compared to the RM17.2bil collected in 2014 through SST.

The current government's main strategy appears to be to depend on crude oil prices remaining high for an extended period of time, this reliance on petroleum-related revenue means that the country's budget will be vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices. Since the implementation of GST in 2015, revenue has proven to be much more balanced.

On June 1 with the implementation of zero rated GST the Customs department already received 20 complaints on profiteering on the first day and expects to receive more in the next few days. The government therefore has to implement new laws to strictly enforce and curb unlawful profiteers.

### ■ Pros and cons

As is with every amendment, the GST has its share of pros and cons. Amongst its advantages are that it has no hidden charges. GST mainly consists of 2 taxes, Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST), and State Goods and Services Tax (SGST). These taxes have been levied on all the manufacturing goods and services which are offered in the country, resulting in no hidden taxes other than CGST and SGST which can be charged for the goods and services.

GST has also been amicable towards business. As the cost of goods reduces, consumption rate increases, which in turn benefits companies and business individuals greatly.

The most favourable factor gained from the implementation of GST was the permanent removal of all the unnecessary tax rates which were dominant in

One of the most apparent disadvantages of this tax reform is its impact on the country's real estate industry.

the economy. This includes value added tax (VAT), octroi, central sales tax, state sales tax, entry tax, and others.

However, given all its leverage, one of the most apparent disadvantages of this tax reform is its impact on the country's real estate industry. GST added 8% to the price of new houses which had simultaneously led to deterioration in the demand for new homes in Malaysia.

What's more, the payment of the GST had to be made online. This proved to be inconvenient for the small businesses to comply, particularly when compared to the old days, where the process of tax filing was conducted offline. GST also required quarterly or monthly submissions which affected the cash flow of companies as it was calculated on billings rather than collections.

In 2017, the revenue collected from GST was RM44.3 billion, which was 3.3% of gross domestic products (GDP).

### ■ Money back to the people

Malaysians will enjoy three months tax free on goods and services. The MOF has indicated that Malaysians will have approximately RM17 billion in savings for the rest of the year that would otherwise have been collected as tax and are expected to save RM3 billion from the fixed pricing of RON95 petrol and diesel prices, while a special assistance of RM700 million will be given to civil servants ranking Grade 41 and below and pensioners for Hari Raya. Therefore they will have RM20.7 billion this year in savings, which the ministry believes will boost consumer spending and business profits.



# GST vs SST: the differences

Implemented on April 1, 2015, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a tax on most products and services for domestic consumption at every level in the production process. As a replacement for the Sales and Services Tax (SST), GST can be claimed as input tax for companies with revenue above RM500k.

Also known as Value Added Tax (VAT) in some other countries, GST is the most commonly used form of taxation used by 160 out of 190 countries globally.

Implemented in the 1970's, the SST is covered by two separate tax laws on a wide variety of goods and services at a single level. The Sales Tax Act in 1972 is a single-stage tax charged at the manufacturer's level.

Meanwhile, the Service Tax Act of 1975 is a single-stage tax charged at the consumer's level with the exception of tax free zones. Prior to being replaced by the GST, the sales tax was at 10% and service tax was at 6% respectively.

The Sales Tax is levied only to the manufacturer or consumer level while the Service Tax is imposed to consumers who are using tax services. As it varies from five to ten percent to specific rates, the SST rates are deemed to be not as transparent as the six percent rate of GST. Paid input tax is not claimable by businesses.

With the GST, tax is being levied to every level of distribution. These include manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. Paid input tax is claimable by businesses.

Hence, the GST is claimed to be able to curb transparency, tax-payment issues and misappropriations as the tax system is at a one standard rate of six percent and is not an added tax.

On the other hand, the SST rates vary from five to ten percent or a specific rate, not forgetting another six percent from service tax. As such, certain importers, manufacturers, wholesalers or retailers fail to declare their taxes through transfer pricing.

Even so, GST was unpopular amongst the people as it has caused hardships with the cost of goods going up since implementation.

While it is true that some goods were exempted from GST, with a zero percent rate, these goods are often items that are only purchasable by those comprising of the high-income group, such as lobsters.

Although input tax is claimable by businesses, the GST claim back on tax is difficult, and oftentimes can be declined. What's more, businesses require RM500k in sales before being able to claim tax input.

However, the SST too is not without its own shortcomings, with the biggest concern being that the SST will cause government tax revenue to drop when compared to the GST, with the revenue collected being RM44.3 billion last year.

SST is also seen as a less progressive form of tax, seeing that most countries have moved on to GST. Switching back from GST to SST will also cost businesses ambiguity and ultimately, more loss on money.



## GST

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX



Multi-stage tax



Broad-based, levied on all goods and services including imports (unless specifically excluded)



- Standard rate of tax: 6%
- Certain supplies are treated as zero-rated, exempt or are subject to relief



Mandatory registration upon reaching threshold of RM500,000 (voluntary registration also possible)



Input tax can be offset against output tax



Returns filed either monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly (with the option to request an alternative filing period)

## SST

SALES AND SERVICE TAX



Single-stage tax



Levied on all locally manufactured/imported goods and certain prescribed services



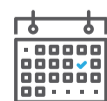
- Sales tax: ranging from 5% to 25%
- Service tax: 6%



- Sales Tax: A license had to be obtained if annual sales turnover exceeded RM100,000
- Service Tax: A range of registration thresholds from 0 to RM3mil



No tax credit mechanism



Returns filed on a bi-monthly basis

# Keeping Promises of Reform

by  
**Sangetha Jayakumar**

**T**he new Pakatan Harapan led Federal Government carries a huge burden of expectation on its shoulder. Institutional reform is definitely an important item on the agenda, but with 61 years of BN hegemony, the laundry list of problems with Malaysian institutions forms a litany of woes perhaps as long as the list of Malaysian agencies themselves.

However, it is important for the new government to manage the electorate's expectations and come up with timelines to deliver these institutional reforms, beginning with the most urgent, as this is important to maintain market stability and continued investor confidence. Falling short of this could prove both politically and economically detrimental.



## Civil Service

This tops the list of reforms, as under the previous regime, the Federal civil service has grown to be bloated and highly bureaucratic. The large number of

government employees is driven by the created need to bolster the former government's Bumiputra agenda and credentials, often resulting in overlapping ministries, agencies and recursive red tape. Not only is this counter-productive, it results in a crowded workspace with little room for individual career growth and training opportunity, which in turn, hampers the ability of that particular department to contribute meaningfully to the national GDP or Productivity Index.

To simply axe the civil servants would be out of the question- the impact would result in the complete negation of trickle-down effect on as many as the touted number of 15% or around 300,000 staff.. Instead what could be considered is a two-prong strategy of repurposing and privatization. Repurposing would involve retraining government employees that are redundant and deploying them to critical areas, such as healthcare, while reducing the headcount in areas that are deemed less of a necessity. These staffs can be designed to be mobile, much like the PSD's revolving talent pool. The second would be to market know-how from the existing civil service as a marketable expertise for profit. That way, instead of being seen purely as a cost center, it would actually help offset its own costs. This has been done before in agencies like the EPF or LHDN.



## Educational reform

Much has been said about national harmony and how the policies of the past twenty years resulted in poor cohesion between the races and growing mistrust among adherents of various faiths. In the medium term, this erodes political and economic goodwill within communities, which is vital to a vibrant internal economy, but on the long term it threatens to unravel the delicate social fabric of the nation itself.

The key to this is education- from the formative years right through graduation and beyond. Aside from removing internally damaging modules like BTN, it is essential to fill these gaps of overt nationalism with both moderate ideologies and a true sense of patriotism among the young. Also key to this is the support structure for education- with teachers being bogged down with administrative tasks and incredulous paperwork, it has to be simplified and the joy of teaching needs to be brought back into the classroom and beyond.

Multiple streams of education is expensive, and will be more expensive with the push

We have a deficit of new technology and new processes here in Malaysia. We should learn from other countries where students are encouraged to enter vocational and technology training from the early age of 13.



Charles Santiago, Member of Parliament for Klang since 2008

for vernacular education from beyond K-12 to tertiary level, therefore a holistic approach towards education should be taken. This could be achieved with increased emphasis on vocational and technical training (TVET) which would gel well with Malaysia's push for technically-capable skilled workers to fulfil both local and regional demand.

Charles Santiago, Member of Parliament for Klang since 2008, strongly believes that we need to increase the availability of technical and vocational training facilities especially for the younger generation. "We have a deficit of new technology and new processes here in Malaysia. We should learn from other countries where students are encouraged to enter vocational and technology training from the early age of 13. The idea of vocational training needs to be rethought, there must be a modern digital approach to the training modules provided and knowledge acquisition must be the key."

He went on to add that most of the current programmes are unable to create value for small and medium enterprises. "Therefore because the local output is

not tech savvy or skill savvy the businesses have to either copy or buy technology and skills from foreign countries."

The formation of TVET arms in secondary schools, as well as the elevation of STVM as an equal to SPM in university entrance exams, especially to courses offered by these TVET units, could expedite this process.

With global projects along the entire belt of the OBOR (One Belt One Initiative) and also the emergence of Asia as the new economic powerhouse of the world, it is time for TVET to be seen as a viable and rewarding conscious career choice as opposed to a consolation prize and be positioned as such.

Institutional reform would be also important to support the earlier two. Without strong institutions to support the national agenda, all other reforms would be bound to relapse or worse, completely fail.

The judiciary and legislative arms of government need to be

restored, reshaped and empowered to perform their role as equal partners and guardians of the Malaysian democracy. A commission of eminent persons in those fields should be appointed to convene in tandem with efforts taken to correct our economy and eradicate corruption, as the next progressive natural step.

Educationists and the Malaysian society at large need to be re-educated on their roles, and mechanisms for check-and-balance need to be set in place. For starters, every ministry should appoint an ombudsman and complaints commission to oversee it, reporting to Parliament. Impeachment proce-



dures should be laid in place for judicial members who overstep their boundaries, while the Federal Court, as the apex court, should have a separate Constitutional court division that is empowered to overturn laws.

### Implementation of Parliamentary Select Committees

The government has to ensure in the coming months, that Par-

liament as one of the key state institutions in a democratic system of governance has a critical role to play in promoting democracy and good governance. Parliamentary select committees for instance, if created and given the necessary freedoms and made independent, can provide a huge amount of information to Parliament and



Sivarasa Rasiyah Member of Parliament since 2008 for Sungai Buloh

the broader public. Select Committees are much more consensual in nature and they try to work across party lines to try and ensure that regardless of the politics behind the law, that the law works as effectively as it possibly can.

"As of now we do not have thematic Select Committees in Malaysia" said Sivarasa Rasiyah Member of Parliament since 2008 for Sungai Buloh (previously Subang). He added that "in all fairness Pandikar Amin did try and suggest to cabinet

the creation of just 10 Select Committees to shadow cabinet, however the previous Najib administration did not allow that through."

"I think that we must start by creating at least 10 Select Committees, to ensure that every Ministry is covered by a Select Committee. These SC's must have full powers to summon whomever they feel is necessary to their investigation." Most importantly he added that the SC's and the entire enquiry process must be done in the public domain, and the report that follows is made public as well.

We must modernise the process and bring back the respect and independence of Parliament as a separate arm of government. Documents released by the SC or any committee in Parliament must be available to the public.

In the UK, Select Committees can summon public officials, civil servants and even Ministers to answer questions in relation to a specific subject matter. The benefit of Select Committees is that they can delve far deeper and more thoroughly into issues, providing unprecedented amount of details. The reality is that proper SC's can do much more than MPs can do on the floor of Parliament, because they can force the government of the day to explain and justify their actions and in doing so the government along the way also improve their act.

# THE REFUGEE FEST

Sharing A Global Responsibility

28 June - 1 July 2018, The Black Box Publika



by **Cecelia Alphonsus**

**T**he Refugee Fest is back at Publika's Black Box for the third year running. This four-day festival runs from 28 June 2018 to 1st July 2018. The first of its kind in Asia, the festival hosts the participation of the various refugee communities in the country.

Festival Director, Mahi Ramakrishnan says, "The main focus of the festival is to give the refugees a voice to express

themselves and also to showcase their talents. While it's important to understand that the refugees are fleeing persecution, violence and death; are victims of abuse, torture and trafficking, we believe it's equally important to also acknowledge them as people with immense abilities. This is pertinent, so that the Malaysian society and the government can work together to support and nurture these talents, especially

now that we have a new government that has pledged to look into the welfare of the refugees."

"The festival also serves as a platform to continue building bridges between Malaysian society and the refugee community so that we can impart the knowledge that this is a global responsibility."

While the festival strives to explain why people seek refuge in not just Malaysia but

other parts of the world as well, it also demonstrates the importance of inclusion and why we are stronger as a society because of the diversity.

Over this four-day festival refugees will come together to showcase their culture and tradition through art. Also contributing to the festival is a line-up of activists, filmmakers and photographers who would present their work on the refugee communities.

## Launch Day Program 28 June, 2018

- **2.45pm:** Arrival of guests
- **3.00pm:** Welcome remarks by Mahi Ramakrishnan, Festival Director
- **3.10pm:** Opening remarks by JK Asher, Author & Activist
- **3.20pm:** Photo presentation titled "Waiting for Rain" by photojournalist David Verbeckt on climate refugees in Somalia
- **3.30pm:** Keynote address & Launch of The Refugee Fest: Sharing A Global Responsibility by HE Madam Maria Castillo Fernandez, EU Ambassador to Malaysia. She will also launch a poetry book by refugee poets
- **3.45pm:** Presentation and poetry performance by Syrian refugee Mwaffa'a Al-Hajjar
- **3.55pm:** Poetry performance in Ghazal by Ahmadi refugee Saima Shah
- **4.05pm:** Bharathanatyam dance performance by Sri Lankan Tamil refugee Gopi Nath (TBC)
- **4.15pm:** Tea Break
- **4.30pm:** Film Screening and Q&A with Zan Azlee, Director
- **5pm:** End

## 2nd Day Program 29 June, 2018

- **4pm:** Film Screening: "Road to Biate" by Fazil Nc and Shawn Sebastian - This film traces one of the oldest tribes that reside in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram called Biate and is about a Musician from Chennai (South of India) travelling to live with a Biete family to explore the musical practices and their traditions which is on the verge of extinction. This is followed by a Q&A with Director Fazil Nc
- **5pm:** Panel - Is the unfolding refugee crisis a global responsibility? Panelists: EU Ambassador HE Maria Castillo Fernandez, Charles Santiago, Chairperson of ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, Lilianne Fan, Humanitarian Specialist and Founder of Geutanyoe Foundation Moderator: Henry Koh, Human Rights Specialist @ Fortify Rights
- **6pm:** Traditional Mon Umbrella Dance by Mon Refugee Organisation Learning Centre in collaboration with Geutanyoe Malaysia
- **7pm:** An Oriental Flamenco presentation followed by Q&A with Artists Omar AlKhamash & Majd Hassan
- **8pm:** End

## 3rd Day Program 30 June, 2018

- **4pm:** Film Screening: "Poets of the Past/Fallen Chinar 2" by Fazil Nc - The film tells us the everyday struggles of people in Kashmir, India through narratives of a group of young artists. This is followed by a Q&A with Director Fazil Nc
- **5pm:** Panel - Traditional media vs New Media in Refugee News Coverage Panelists: J K Asher, Author/Filmmaker, Hafidz Baharom, Columnist/Political Analyst, Umapagan Ambikaipakan, Journalist (TBC) Moderator: John Quinlley, Human Rights Specialist@ Fortify Rights
- **6pm:** Recipes and Ceremonies: Traditional food preparation and Tanaka demonstration
- **7pm:** Theatre presentation by refugees from six different communities, presented by Same Skies
- **8pm:** End

## 4th Day Program 1 July, 2018

- **4pm:** Refugee theatre titled "Screaming in Silence" - a play about child marriages in Afghanistan by Parastoo Theatre followed by a Q&A with Director Saleh Sepas
- **5pm:** Poetry Performance by The Refugee Poets Society followed by a panel discussion. Panel: Poetry as a form of resistance Panelists: Mwaffa's Al-Hajjar, Syrian poet, Harnika, Tamil poet, Saima Shah, Ahmadi poet Moderator: Pauline Fan, Writer
- **6pm:** Closing remarks and launch of a film titled "From Killing Fields to Playing Fields" by Charles Santiago, Klang MP and Chairperson of ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (TBC) The film looks at Rohingya football players who aim to play at the Conifa Games, which is equivalent to the World Cup, followed by a Q&A with Director JK Asher
- **7pm:** Indian classical dance presentation by Tamil refugee Kayalvili Manoharan
- **7.10pm:** Close of Festival



# HOPE OF A NATION

TABUNG HARAPAN MALAYSIA

RM **52 216 682**

3pm on June 8th

by **Cecelia Alphonsus**

**A** lot has been said about the Tabung Harapan Malaysia or Hope Fund since it was launched. As of June 8th, the amount collected stands at RM52.22 million. Undeterred by naysayers and critics, people from all walks of life, race, creed and age are happily contributing to the fund daily.

Malaysians generally are quite tight-fisted and are champions at haggling just to save a ringgit or two. So, it is indeed refreshing to see how willingly and happily they are to dig into their pockets and break-open piggy banks to donate what they can afford. What is even more heart-warming, children and teenagers are wanting to do their bit as well by digging into their savings or donating their allowance money.

Justina Shanti Gabriel, a Malaysian residing in Australia says, "the reason I want to donate is that I love my country and I

want to contribute for the benefit of the people who live there though I don't live there anymore. By helping the government, it will help Malaysians too. I just want to give to my country, that is all that is to it."

MaryAnn Tan, from Rawang shares that she decided to chip in because "the debt left behind by the former government is so massive. I love my country too much to see it slide back to being a backwater country due to this. I am doing it because I hope that with my little donation, it would lessen the burden that the future generations would have to bear, all because of one man's greed."

While critics claim that it is a futile attempt as the nation's purportedly one trillion-ringgit debt is too high to overcome, netizens like Wan Hanuman says that he didn't think twice about donating. "All this time, it is only the army and the police that can serve and protect our nation. With the

fund, Tun has given ordinary people like me the chance to do something for *tanah tumpah darahku*, to make things easier for our children and future generations of our beloved country."

Even before the fund was set up by the government, some Malaysians had already started crowdfunding exercises and were asking where they could donate money when news broke about the actual state of debt the nation was facing.

This level of patriotism has hardly been seen before (aside from Thomas Cup matches) where the euphoria of being Malaysian superseded everything else that we have been repeatedly indoctrinated with that is designed to divide us.

While the fund may grow steadily and no doubt it will help in some way or another, the true hope for the nation is that just maybe we have finally come of age as Malaysians.



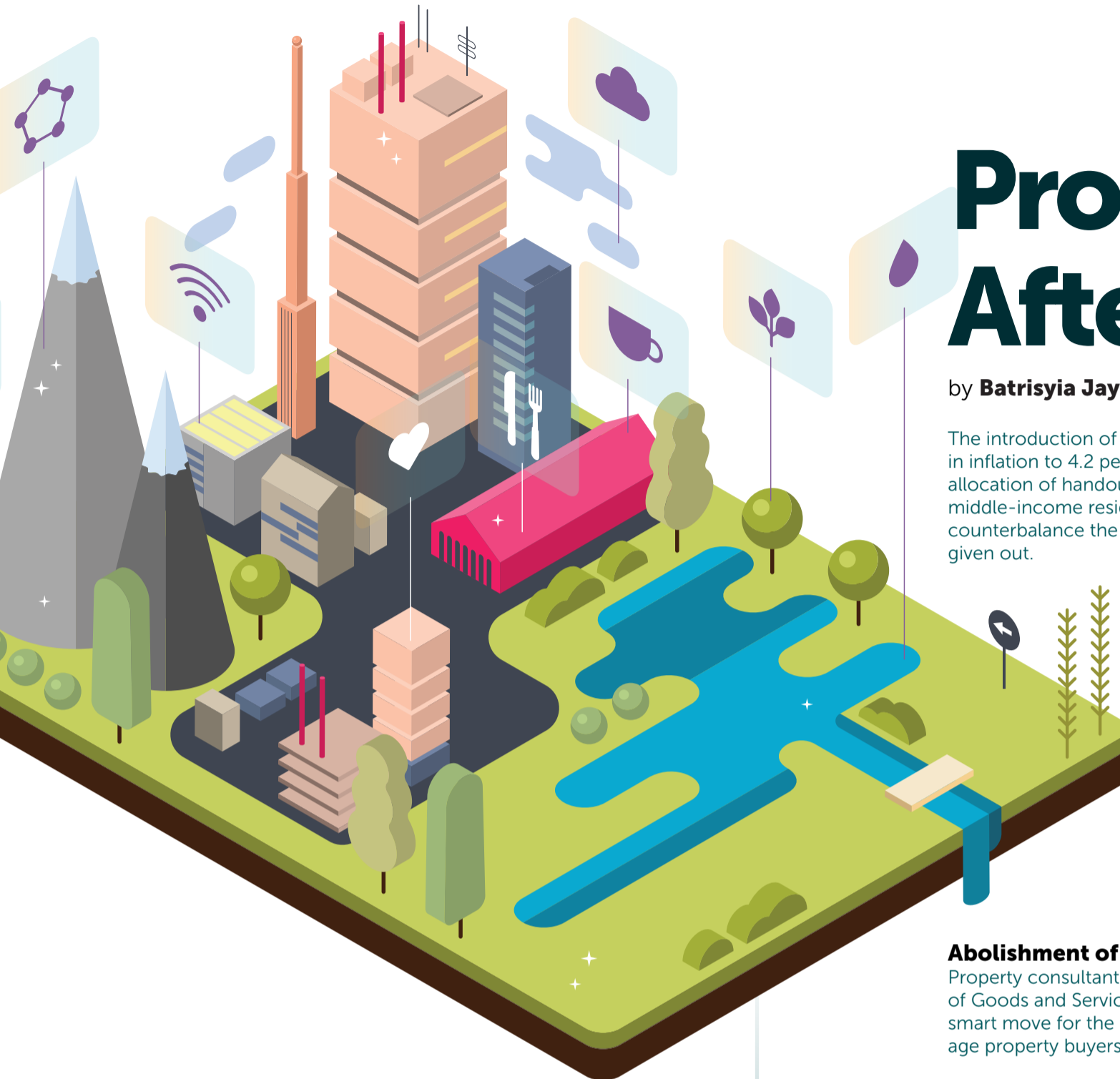
**Macik Puan Sri**

**Hye you alls! Malaysia baru.**

**As I write this it would be the one month anniversary of the birth of a new nation with albeit an old leader, but nevertheless still a new dawn for my beloved country. Macik has been walking over the moon for a month though with apprehensions, change is scary.**

*But Malaysians are a daring lot, a people with hope and belief who went beyond colour and creed to go out there and vote. On voting day it felt like going to the funfair, everyone was excited. Some looked sleepy, some were busy posting on insta, but what was so beautiful in my eyes was how everyone was united and taking care of each other. I read those living overseas passed their ballots to strangers to bring back to Malaysia. Everyone has so much love and devotion for their homeland. My favourite no GST! I have gone to some shops and truly prices have gone down, my water filter is less, generally everyone has*

*removed the 6%, so it's good, I have extra money. I hear a certain someone has been in hideout and is now minus 284 bags and oodles of cash. Imagine we have our own Mary Antoinette with glittering rings and fancy big hair, living in her fancy big house not realising that the people are not blind and this is not the dark ages. Whatever happens will happen but Malaysians must stand proud for their achievement of being a beacon of democracy and following the rule of law. That's all for now! Macik needs to go and get that red bag for Raya its Versace I hear. Selamat Hari Raya you alls.*



# Properties After GST

by **Batrisyia Jay**

The introduction of GST back in April 2015 caused a spike in inflation to 4.2 percent in the year 2016, even after the allocation of handouts by the government for low and middle-income residents which had been given to help counterbalance the bigger tax bills implemented, were given out.

## Abolishment of GST

Property consultants had announced that the zero-rating of Goods and Service Tax (GST), effective 1 June, 2018 is a smart move for the new government as this will encourage property buyers to end their wait-and-see stance.

Here are the advantages and disadvantages of the abolishment of GST on the property market in Malaysia:

## Disadvantages



Property market is expected to take two years to recover



Developers faces dilemma over the pricing of properties already built or under construction as GST on materials has been paid



Bringing prices down by 6% will lower developers' profit margins



GST revenue is expected to hit RM43.8 billion under budget 2018



**RM25.6 billion**

Government revenue will see a shortfall of RM25.6 billion as GST has been abolished

## Advantages



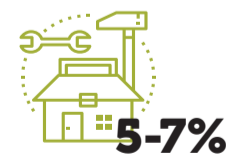
Transaction price for commercial properties will be cheaper



Selling price for residential properties will be reduced as building and raw materials are no longer charged with GST



Estimated cost reduction for residential sector for developers: 2-3%



Estimated cost reduction in the industrial and commercial sector for developers: 5-7%



Selling price for commercial properties will be reduced inline with the cost reduction



Middle-class earners will increase purchasing power by 2-4%

by  
**Cecelia  
Alphonus**  
Chief Editor  
Media Selangor



Recently, KDEB Waste Management Sdn Bhd (KDEBWM) was named Smart Waste Solutions Company of the Year 2018 by Frost & Sullivan. They will be honoured amongst other top Malaysian firms at the 14th annual Malaysia Excellence Awards banquet which will be held on 26th June 2018.

Mr. Hazmi Yusof, Senior Vice President and Malaysia Managing Director at Frost & Sullivan said that the award recipients have demonstrated exemplary achievements in the local market. The award puts the spotlight on firms that are driving innovation, striving for excellence and creating a positive change in the economy by recognizing best-in-class products, companies and individuals.

At the helm of KDEBWM is Managing Director, Ramli Mohd Tahir who has steered Selangor's premier smart waste solutions company to outstanding achievement and superior performance in areas such as leadership, technological innovation and customer service.

Speaking to *Selangor Journal* recently, Ramli said that never before in the history of the industry has a company invested so much in capital expenditure. "We have invested more than RM100 million in asset development. This is something that has never been done before in this industry."

KDEBWM, wholly owned by Menteri Besar Selangor Incorporated (MBI), was appointed Project Management Company (PMC) by the State Government of Selangor on March 2016 to manage domestic waste collection and public cleansing for Klang Municipal Council (MPK), as a pilot project for seven years, with effect from 1 July 2016.

"We have been entrusted with a grant and fully supported by the state government to keep Selangor clean. It is not my money, it is the tax-payers money



# Breath of Fresh Air

“

We have been entrusted with a grant and fully supported by the state government to keep Selangor clean. It is not my money, it is the tax-payers money and I owe it to them to make sure that we deliver on their expectations.

”

## KDEB Waste Management Sdn Bhd

wholly owned by Menteri Besar Selangor Incorporated (MBI)

Invested

RM

**100m**

in asset development

and I owe it to them to make sure that we deliver on their expectations.”

Ramli approached the challenge of smart waste management by going back to the basics of economies of scale and utilizing technology to ensure that he created a business model that works efficiently and effectively.

“It is like managing a sports team,” says Ramli “if they are given the right equipment, the best shoes for performance, the right training and coaching, there is no reason why they cannot succeed.”

Similarly, with KDEBWM, Ramli realized that capital expenditure was necessary to equip the company with sufficient compactors and roros that are needed to service each area. Each of these lorries were then installed with an automatic vehicle locator system and CCTV which is tagged to their Centralised Command Centre.

“Micro-management is necessary in this business. Technology helps us manage our operators and service our customers better. Each lorry is given a route that we can track at our command centre so if we receive a complaint that garbage has not been collected from a certain area, we can see if the operator by-passed the area in question.”

“If we receive a complaint before 12 noon, I see no reason why we cannot resolve it within the day itself. With our tracking system and on-the-ground personnel in each area we are able to respond to issues faster.”

For Ramli, economies of scale are about ensuring that for each local council that he services, it is first carved up into manageable areas. He identifies where the wet markets, pasar malams, high-density residential and commercial areas are and divides them into equal areas which are then tendered out to different operators. Each operator then manages one compactor or roro where the waste collected is optimal to the tonnage capacity of the compactor servicing the area. This is to ensure the lorries are not overworked.

This, Ramli believes is key to ensure that public funds are utilized in the best possible way and to create more businesses in the waste management industry.

“We are basically a project manage-

ment company, not a monopoly. Our aim is to ensure that the local economy is stimulated by creating more business owners in this industry. We invest in purchasing the compactors, we process the permits and when we handover the compactors to the operators, I have already pre-signed a transfer of ownership of the compactor to the operator which comes into effect after 5 years,” says Ramli.

This sense of empowerment and ownership is one of the key factors that drive operators to perform according to the standards and procedures set by KDEBWM. For many, it is a golden opportunity as on their own, they have neither the funds nor the credit worthiness to invest in the capital expenditure needed to be a player in the waste management industry.

These machines are their bread and butter and they adhere to the stringent maintenance regime imposed by KDEBWM to ensure that they are always road-worthy and performing at optimum level.

“Every 6 months, we arrange with Puspakom to inspect our vehicles so they do not pose as a hazard to road users or the environment. Some local councils that are not under us, just repaint their old lorries but not KDEBWM, we make sure that our vehicles are in tip-top condition and don't leave a trail of waste water on the roads.”

Currently KDEBWM has 300 operators which is likely to double by year end as they take over more local councils.

For Ramli, he attributes the success of KDEBWM so far to the philosophy of getting to the root cause of a problem and finding the right solution for it, even if it means convincing people to do what was never done before and to change how the industry is managed.

“This is the new model in smart waste management. I believe with the right intention, planning, buy-in and mindset we can keep Selangor clean together.”

**A Chartered Marketer by training and aspiring media maven by passion, striving for a fairer, sustainable and a more caring world.**



## Theatre



### We, The Singaporeans

facebook.com/events/1733233373401441/

We, The Singaporeans (WTS!) is a quirky and relatable exploration of the unique dynamics in Singaporean culture. Captured by the symbol of an iconic kopi-tiam chair, the dancers from The Royal Dance-Off (TRDO / @trdoco) present a comedic yet action-packed play on both the things that Singaporeans love, and the things that drive them mad.

- 📍 Damansara Performing Arts Centre (DPAC) (H-01, DPAC, Empire Damansara, Jalan PJU 8/8, Damansara Perdana, 47820 Petaling Jaya)
- 🎫 RM58
- 📅 10 June 2018

## Art

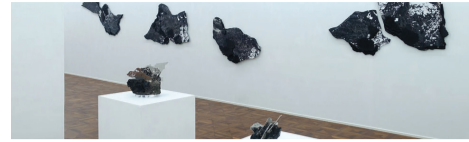


### Le French Festival: France Is Now, Now Is France

lefrenchfestival.com.my/events-en-cours-de-montage-2/visual-arts/

Her first exhibition in Kuala Lumpur, Melissa Tan presents 16 wall and floor sculptures in Back to Where We've Never Been, scheduled to run from 24 May – 14 June. The exhibition is a continuation of the artist's feature at Singapore Biennale 2016 with the Opening Reception taking place on Thursday, 24 May 2018 at 5pm. An artist talk will be held on Saturday, 26 May at 3pm.

- 📍 Richard Koh Fine Art (229, Jalan Maarof, Bukit Bandaraya, Bangsar 59100, Kuala Lumpur.)
- 🎫 Free admission (By appointment only)
- 📅 1 June 2018 – 1 July 2018



### Back to Where We've Never Been

rkfineart.com/exhibition/melissa-tan-back-to-where-weve-never-been/

Her first exhibition in Kuala Lumpur, Melissa Tan presents 16 wall and floor sculptures in Back to Where We've Never Been, scheduled to run from 24 May – 14 June. The exhibition is a continuation of the artist's feature at Singapore Biennale 2016 with the Opening Reception taking place on Thursday, 24 May 2018 at 5pm. An artist talk will be held on Saturday, 26 May at 3pm.

- 📍 Richard Koh Fine Art (229, Jalan Maarof, Bukit Bandaraya, Bangsar 59100, Kuala Lumpur.)
- 🎫 (By appointment only)
- 📅 1 June 2018 – 14 June 2018
- 📅 26 June 2018



### Cheap Spirits

facebook.com/events/1788991117824466/

Singapore-based photographer George Wong and Singaporean painter Yeo Tze Yang's 'Cheap Spirits' exhibition celebrates the mundane by revealing the crude and sublime moments of daily life, prompting us to question the nature behind the subjects' momentary state of ecstasy, as well as examining everyday scenes such as a dirt-stained kaki lima and a man on the bus looking into the distance.

- 📍 Our ArtProjects Kuala Lumpur (No. 80 Jalan Rotan Off Jalan Kampung Attap 50460 Kuala Lumpur)
- 🎫 Free admission
- 📅 1 June 2018 – 9 June 2018



### CHEEV The Unconventional Sculptor

g13gallery.com/preview/cheev-the-unconventional-sculptor/

A tribute to the late Vong Nyam Chee (1956-2017) or better known as Cheev, Gallery 13 (G13) is having a tribute exhibition of his artworks which is ongoing at the National Visual Art Gallery up until 30th June. The exhibition is curated and initiated by Tan Sei Hon with the support of G13 and the National Visual Art Gallery (NVAG).

- 📍 National Visual Arts Gallery (Balai Seni Visual Negara) (No 2, Jalan Temerloh, off Jalan Tun Razak, 53200 Kuala Lumpur)
- 🎫 Free admission
- 📅 21 April 2018 – 30 June 2018



### 101 Faces of Malaysia

facebook.com/thehulo/

This photo exhibition features the works of local photographers Ravi John Smith, Ahmad Yusni, Thomas Phoon, Raj Thangaraj and more. The photos on display tell a story about Malaysia through the lenses of each photographer, whose individual style and technique add to the unique and vibrant depictions of our beloved country.

- 📍 The Hulo Hotel+Gallery Bukit Bintang (196 Jalan Changkat Thambi Dollah, Bukit Bintang, 55100 Kuala Lumpur)
- 🎫 Free admission
- 📅 1 June 2018 – 10 June 2018



### Seen

facebook.com/Weiling-Gallery-157878490904431/

Seen brings together ten leading Malaysian and renowned international artists to showcase their visual and activist projects – from documentary and photography to conceptual practice, from appropriation of censored imagery to re-contextualization of leaked footage – the curated exhibition provides a critical insight into contemporary surveillance culture, exposing the hidden gaze and the anonymous watchers that are at once omnipresent and covert.

- 📍 Wei-Ling Contemporary, the Gardens (RT01, 6th Floor, The Gardens Mall, Mid Valley City, Kuala Lumpur)
- 🎫 Free admission
- 📅 1 June 2018 – 30 June 2018



We are at the tail end of Ramadan and Aidil Fitri beckons around the corner. Most Malaysians would have had their fill of fancy Iftar buffets around town as every hotel tries to out-do the other by serving up an international gastronomic feast to sate even the most finicky of taste buds. Before bringing the curtain down on Iftar buffets this year, The Eatery at Four Points Sheraton Puchong is worth a visit to evoke the nostalgia of typical Malaysian fare from yester years.

Warisan Sajian Juadah is a complete offering that goes back to the basics of food that we grew up with. Feast on a variety of perfectly grilled satay, be spoilt for choice as delicious nasi kandar curries from the ubiquitous fish head curry to the aromatic prawn masala and fragrant mutton kurma vie for your attention.