

PRESS STATEMENT

PSM Mourns the departure of Rustam Sani

Thursday 24 April 2008, by [ARUTCHELVAN S.](#), [NASIR HASHIM Mohd](#), [PSM \(Malaysia\)](#) (Date first published: 23 March 2008).

Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) mourn the death of fellow comrade, activist, academician Sdr. Rustam Sani who passed away early this morning.

Rustam has been a consistent, critical political analyst. His view and thoughts on issues are has always been progressive, well thought, rationale and with a strong foundation. He has been a very respected person among our circles and PSM hold him highly in getting his views, on many issues which involves history and the National Question.

At his funeral today, we were surprised to note when talking to some friends, that many did not realize that he was the son of the great Ahmad Boestaman, the founder member of API and Parti Rakyat. It is perhaps not Rustam style to ride on his father's popularity but rather carve his own destination through his own work.

We were told by his wife Rohani today that he had much more to offer and he wanted to hear what the new MPs have got to say about May day. He was also about to launch his latest book this weekend.

Rustam has many more years to offer but we are glad that he has seen at least the start of the changes demanded by the people in denying BN a 2/3 majority. He wrote in his new year message last year, ***"Trust is definitely dead, but isn't this the season that reminds us that miracles somehow are still possible?"***

PSM salutes Rustam's view on building a strong class based plural society. We reproduce below some of his thoughts below:

The day after the Hindraf rally, he wrote

On watching images of last Sunday's massive demonstration on international television news bulletins I cannot but wistfully thought about what a historic day it could have been had the energy, resolve and imagination of the people involved in both the Bersih and Hindraf rallies be united to oppose social injustice in this country.

He is also very consistent on his views on "social construct"

The mess we are in is our own doing, the "social construct" that we have created for ourselves - and it is but a function of our own intellectual laziness (or should I say incompetence) in perceiving and formulating an alternative notion of a "society of intent" for ourselves since the departure of the colonial masters from our shores.

All we did was took over the structure and form of the colonial "plural society" as it was and let it

proceed on, through our own method of muddling through, towards its post-colonial form that we have today. The Malay nationalistic ideology from the days of anti-colonial movement was never recast nor reformulated to be the basis of our post-colonial nation building or nation creating process to cope with the new social and political environment.

- December 2007

Today our society has naturally become much more complex, that it is rare for many to even know who lives on their block or even in the same building. Our culture is segmented – all the more so because of our dismal intellectual failure to create a true “nation” out of the segmented communities of the colonial plural society.

With modernity and technological advancement things have indeed become worse for us sociologically. We have become even more isolated, so that we are but strangers passing by each other in the midst of individual self-awareness and self-preservation.

Today Malaysians have become even more mobile – and are less likely to live in extended families. In recent years the permanent, local and family-based jobs has all but disappeared and workers have increasingly been forced to move far from their roots to find and retain employment.

We are isolated as we drive to work, pushed to produce so hard while at work that co-workers become objects rather than compatriots, and spoken to and dealt with by the public sphere on the basis of what divides us, not what we share in common.

Merchants cannot be trusted to deliver what they promise, employers cannot be trusted to pay their obligatory EPF contributions, and even spouses cannot be trusted to keep their vows. We live in a “buyers beware” culture, where every person is on its own to make it through a jungle of real and perceived threats and attacks.

One cannot walk in one’s own street without fear of some idiots being tempted to snatch away ornaments dangling out of one’s body parts for show off, cannot book a flight on an airplane without fearing being bumped because the flight was oversold, cannot drive on the freeway without concern that the idiot racing to take your space will not pull a gun to prove his point, cannot give a toy to a child without fear of lead poisoning, and certainly cannot trust a politician on anything at all. Posted on 18 dec 2007

Rustam demise is a great loss the left in Malaysia. Nevertheless his writings would continue to guide and lead us on the challengers as well on what is needed to resolve the complex problems faced by the nation.

On Behalf of the Central Committee of Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM)

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