

Malaysia: PSM politicians bare it all

Monday 16 March 2009, by [PSM \(Malaysia\)](#) (Date first published: 12 March 2009).

Prior to the March 8 polls, nobody could have predicted that the then unregistered Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) would see two of its leaders being elected to Parliament and the Selangor state assembly respectively.

Not only were they elected, but its candidate for the Sungai Siput parliamentary seat Dr D Jeyakumar had also slain the formidable incumbent of three decades, MIC president S Samy Vellu.

Today, the party celebrated its first electoral anniversary victory and to prove that power had not altered their stand, the two reps and three other PSM leaders publicly declared their assets.

Speaking to reporters at the function in Kuala Lumpur, Jeyakumar said this was in line with the party's belief for a transparent, equitable and socialistic governance.

"What we are doing is to show that we should be honest about serving the people and not get elected to get rich. If you want to get rich, go into business. Don't be a parliamentarian," he said.

In his declaration, Jeyakumar said he has a house worth RM120,000 and three old cars, altogether valued at RM16,000. He also has RM25,000 in his bank account and RM10,000 in shares.

Apart from Jeyakumar, party president and Kota Damansara state rep Dr Nasir Hashim, secretary-general and Kajang local councillor S Arutchelvan and two other PSM leaders appointed as local councillors declared their assets.

Nasir, who apparently does not own a house, declared a RM40,000 car in his possession and RM5,000 in savings.

Prior to the March 8 polls, PSM was the first party ever in Malaysia to have its election candidates publicly declare their assets.

Asked on the difference between today's asset declaration and the one conducted a year ago, there appeared to be significant changes in the asset ownership of Nasir and Jeyakumar.

However, Nasir explained that it was due to "our salaries as state assemblyperson and MP".

Yesterday, Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim announced that he and his executive councillors will also publicly declare their assets on the state's official website beginning tomorrow.

However, unlike the PSM reps, the cabinet members will only declared assets they have acquired since taking office a year old, and not before that.

Focus is on empowerment

Meanwhile, PSM also released its activity reports on the two constituencies it represents for the past year.

In Sungai Siput, Jeyakumar said the main focus was on empowerment programmes as well as

ongoing networking initiatives and consultation with various groups in addressing local issues.

“Unlike Kota Damansara, Sungai Siput being a parliamentary constituency and me being an opposition (rep), I do not have the privilege of having financial allocations.

“The poor people there are used to getting cash handouts (from BN leaders) to pay their bills and sort but we instead focus on addressing the root issue as to why these people have no money to pay their bills in the first place,” he said.

He added that from the political culture angle, PSM was leading the way with their programmes that include broad participation from the locals.

These programmes include consultation on how to address local problems as well as developing policies together so that the constituency would be operated not by just one person, but a community.

The same can be said about Kota Damansara but with the added advantage of having some financial backing from the Pakatan Rakyat Selangor state government.

Avoiding culture of dependancy

Despite this, Nasir (right) said he would not give out money easily in order to avoid the culture of dependancy.

“As far as necessary items like wheelchairs, medicines and all that, we would not hesitate to give but with the condition that receipts be provided.

“But for projects, say someone asks for RM5,000, I would only give them half and tell them to work harder for the other half. They would refer to me as the scrooge,” he said.

Nasir explained that although his approach may not be popular, it was positive in the sense that it would create a more hardworking and independent community.

“If not, the feudal culture will continue. The people will continue to practice this culture where they have to serve the leaders to get benefits. We don’t want this,” he said.

Download the 5-page declaration of assets (416KB PDF): <http://www.parti-sosialis.org/wp-co...>

P.S.

* From PSM website.