

# Malaysia's Socialist Party: 'People's power politics in practice'

Monday 29 March 2010, by [BOYLE Peter](#) (Date first published: 24 March 2010).

March 24, 2010 — The Socialist Party of Malaysia (PSM) is extraordinary in many ways and on March 18 its member of the national parliament, Dr Jeyakumar, its national chairperson and Selangor state assemblyperson, Dr. Nasir Hashim, and the party's three municipal councillors became the only politicians in Malaysia to publicly declare their assets. The declaration of assets and presentation of annual performance reports has become a routine for the party since 2008 when the PSM had its first electoral victories.

The PSM's political representatives are also obliged to give 40% of their income to the party but have been doing more than that. "This is people's power politics in practice. We come in poor and we go out poor", explained Dr Nasir.

In addition, the PSM's representatives stick by the following principles:

1. Building a society which is not cultured to be dependent on subsidies and allocation but a society which is built on principles and people's power.
2. PSM leaders must play a role in eradicating feudalistic relationship with the people. Party leaders should reject VIP treatment, live a simple life and always be seen as being able to be approached by the rakyat (people). The people must respect them for the work they do and not merely the positions they hold.
3. PSM leaders who hold public positions cannot be directors of profit-orientated corporate bodies.
4. Local party service centres — organised in every branch and to which local people bring their problems to be acted on — have to be open in all areas where the party has fielded candidates, irrespective of whether the party won or lost. Elected representatives must make themselves available at their local service centre once a week.
5. Elected party members can be recalled by members for under-performance at any time during their term.
6. Aspiring candidates for general election must have served in a constituency for a period not less than five years. the PSM strongly rejects "parachute" candidates.

Over the last year, the PSM played very prominent role in the anti-GST (goods and services tax) campaign, which the Barisan Nasional (BN) government is trying to introduce, and in opposing the privatisation of public health care, campaigns for free education, better wages and the implementation of the minimum wage laws. The PSM also pressed the National Bank as well as the prime minister's department for loan restructuring and easy loans to be made available to the poor people struggling with the consequences of the global financial crisis.

While the PSM has not joined the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) or "People's Front" opposition alliance, it staunchly defends PR and works closely with it on specific issues. "We are a Pakatan-friendly party

and we march with PR”, explained Dr Jeyakumar. “We support PR’s reform agenda but we also against capitalism and neoliberal policies.”

**Peter Boyle**

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\* From Links:

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\* Peter Boyle in national convenor of the Socialist Alliance of Australia.