

# **Upclose and Personal with the Minister** **“Meremajakan Perkhidmatan Awam”** **(Rejuvenating the Public Service)**

with

**YB Khairy Jamaluddin**

**When** : 30 April 2015  
**Where** : Razak School of Government  
**Speakers** : YB Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Youth and Sports

## **About The Seminar**

As Malaysia’s Minister of Youth and Sports, YB Khairy Jamaluddin has a significant responsibility to boost Malaysia’s image through youth involvement in the national transformation agenda. In this session, YB Khairy Jamaluddin will deliver his inspiration to aspiring young officer in the public service. This process is important to ensure Malaysia is on track in achieving a developed nation status by 2020. This session will be attended by potential young officers nominated by the upper management from respective ministries/agencies as well as participation from young diplomatic and administrative officer, *Persatuan Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik (PPTD)*.

## **Summary**

In order for Malaysia to grow exponentially, sound institutions are a must. Without it, a country would become a failed state. To bind the rakyat with these institutions, the Perlembagaan Persekutuan which was a social contract was drafted by our forefathers when forming the Malaysian federation. The public service, on the other hand, is a service that must still be able to function effectively regardless of the people in power. Therefore, in order to ensure that is public service is performing well, steps must be taken to ensure that talents are groomed at a younger age so as to ensure that the next generations of leaders are identified.

Youths aged 18 to 40 constitute about 50% of total workforce in the public service. By 2020, most ranks within the public service will be taken up by youths. Hence, it is inevitable that the demography and culture of the public sector will drastically change

within a 5 years' timeframe. The changes in culture, mentality, and expectation in the public sector is also reflected in the changes among the masses. As the main stakeholder of public sector, the rakyat in this digital age have higher expectations of the delivery of public services. They demand greater response and access to public goods in real time. The post-modern challenges of the changes that is happening in Malaysia is therefore one that has to be dealt with in order for the public service to remain relevant to the younger generation. Given 70% of the Malaysian population are living in urban and semi-urban areas, most are more informed on social issues; with a higher understanding of what is happening in the country. Key words and values like efficiency, transparency and accountability that was not as commonly heard before are now being talked about a lot more than they previously have been.

Being an informal and approachable person himself, YB Khairy Jamaluddin believes that the government in the future should be flatter, leaner and more responsive to the rakyat; with less bureaucracies. Governments at this age, he argues should move away from too much protocol while becoming more paperless. That way, the rakyat would see the government and them as an entity and not merely as a regulator and enforcer. The age where the government knows all, he argues has gone. Hence, the government would have to respond to the needs and wants of the people who are demanding more in real time with greater efficiency and responsiveness.

YB Khairy Jamaluddin argues that the rakyat has benefited a lot from physical services such as healthcare provisions, education, governance, and other so called "hard developments". Thus, more are now demanding greater "soft developments" through demands such as integrity, transparency, and efficiency that was not given much notoriety before. Dismissing the myth that these values are associated only with the younger generation, YB Khairy Jamaluddin reinstated that these values applies across the demography. He proposes that rejuvenating the public service sector does not mean replacing older generation with younger officers, but making the public service more efficient and rakyat-friendly through what he terms as the 'CIVIL principle'. CIVIL principle are as follows:

C - Creative : Finding innovative methods to break barriers between rakyat and the public sector and enhance efficiency

I - Integrity : Managing public expectation and perceptions of the public service and its policy through transparency and good ethics

V - Vibrant : Being able to respond to the young population and their demands.  
Being able to deliver service fast and in real-time

I - Inclusivity : Being able to engage with all stakeholders in a decision-making process

L - Leadership : Being resourceful and having strategic short and long-term visions.  
This includes attentiveness to details and having a strategic mind

for future prospect.

Thus, YB Khairy Jamaluddin believes in what he define as the grooming of leaders, the process in which young officers are trained and exposed to various skills and experience in order to prepare them to take on the mantle of leadership. Hence, YB Khairy argues, succession management is a vital part of the whole process. He insisted that such task must be based on meritocracy; where the best public officers are identified, in order to ensure productivity and efficiency in the public sector. Thus, RSOG plays an important role in disseminating useful information to young public officers as well as conducting beneficial trainings for them to better serve the rakyat.

### **Issues raised**

- Besides According to the Anti-Corruption Commission statistics, 40% of corruption arrests involves young officers. The corruption trend among youths and the young officers thus far is worrying. Thus, integrity within the young population is in question. To tackle this problem, we need to first understand why corruption exists. Youths feel pressured from the current economic system and conditions stemming from the rising cost of living. In addition, most young officers are sometimes overwhelmed with the real taste of power that they never experienced before. Without proper anti-corruption education, right values, and rigid enforcements, they can easily fall into the lure of corruption.
- We need a competitive spirit to boost productivity and efficiency. More importantly, the products or the results of the rivalries must be in line with our national interest. Ministries and responsible parties must give proper credits to those involved in serving the rakyat.
- The guest of honour believes that opening up the experience of young public officers by sending them to government-linked companies for a few years will make them better. Through cross-fertilization with the private sector, young officers can become competent leaders across the board.
- The guest of honour learnt a lot about discipline under the army as a Regiment Commander 508, Rejimen Askar Wataniah. As a politician, daily life is hectic. Thus, discipline is needed for a well-balanced life. In terms of work, discipline is needed to construct a clear and sensible image for the public which reflects one's credibility. In addition, being part of the Rejimen Askar Wataniah Malaysia

taught the guest speaker to always remember that ranks and power is artificial whereas the luxuries that comes with it can easily be taken away.

- The volunteer spirit and autonomy in performing certain task is crucial rather than doing something just due to the directions from the higher ups. Most importantly, we cannot force public servants on their choice of political parties. What leaders must do is to win the heart of public servants, and this can be done through trust building. In the modern public service, there is no such thing as a master-servant relationship. Public servants must be able to provide constructive criticisms even to their higher ups.
- We need first class public servants with a first class cabinet. We should aspire to follow Singapore's steps in modernizing and rejuvenating their public sector where young public servants who are credible enough are given top positions in the country.
- One of the biggest challenge is opening up is the listening to the criticisms. Changes can be good, but the problem usually lies in the execution part. Sometimes opening up to people's complaints and criticisms can be seen like opening a 'Pandora box', where more harm than good are felt by rakyat on certain policies. For instance, when it is revealed that youths has the highest tendencies to be corrupt, others run away from dealing with it.
- Youths should be given the platform to blossom and develop themselves while given the perks to do so. Meritocracy should come with age, academic achievements and experience. Young leaders should be groomed with better critical skills for policy and decision making.
- Political will is needed in transformation project. One of the biggest challenge often heard from the public servants is the political interference from political leaders who try to push forward a certain agenda or issue. However, there is no continuity and consistency when leaders change. Hence, a good programme should be enduring while current system should be enhanced instead of changed just for the sake of one's political motives.

- Building good relationship with senior officials must be based on trust. Specialization or division of labour is one of the way to enhance cooperation and trust. Since cooperation is a two-way process, organizations need to enhance their team work skills and a way to do this is to have a thorough discussion of the needs and expectations of each individual in an organization.

## **About the Speaker**

Khairy Jamaluddin is the Minister of Youth and Sports Malaysia and also the Member of Parliament for Rembau, Negeri Sembilan. He is Chief of the UMNO Malaysia Youth Wing and Chair of National Front Youth wing. He obtained his degree from University of Oxford and masters from University College of London. He was nominated as the Young Global Leader by World Economic Forum in Davos 2005, and was named as one of Asia 21 Fellow by Asia Society in 2006. Currently he serves as a Regiment 508 Commander, Askar Wataniah, within Rejimen Askar Wataniah Malaysia.

## **Contact**

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