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Speaker: YAB Tun Daim Zainuddin

In 1965, the Government organised the first Bumiputra Congress with the support of the Malay Chambers of Commerce. I attended it as a young Malay professional.

MARA is a child of this congress. It is interesting to be here today, and to address you.

Formal education was critical to ensuring that the Malays could escape the clutches of generational poverty. To that end, UiTM was established, with the goal of educating the Bumiputeras and therefore empowering them with the knowledge to uplift themselves out of poverty. The only long-term solution to eradicating poverty is always through education.

UiTM, coupled with the various NEP initiatives implemented by the government back in the 1970s, have brought the Bumiputeras a long way from their subjugated status under colonial rule. Our share of the economy has increased by tenfold, and the incidence of poverty is nowhere near as rampant as it was in the days of the NEP.

And today, we see the fruits of this paradigm shift where there is a sizeable Malay middle class, and many professionals stand among them, including successful doctors, lawyers, engineers, and accountants.

UiTM is the largest University in Malaysia, producing at present 150,000 undergraduates annually, with a total alumni base of about 700,000. The role played by UiTM in providing education to so many and elevating their opportunities for further employment is something to be proud of.

Even with the NEP and various other policies and initiatives to help, we are still left behind, with many pressuring the Government to continue with such affirmative action policies to give Bumiputras an advantage over others.

We must ask ourselves – if we have not succeeded after nearly 50 years of these policies, where is the assurance that more of the same old policies will produce different results? In the words of Albert Einstein - doing the same thing over and over again, expecting different results is insanity.

Affirmative action plans are important for every society facing inequality, but the socioeconomic and political landscape we face is different now, so we cannot expect the same policies to stay in place indefinitely.

It is important to remember that those who drafted policies of the NEP never intended for them to be permanent, so we must accept that they are not designed to be so. *Zaman beralih, musim bertukar*. We must move with the times.

Yet today, nearly 50 years after the NEP, a vast majority of Malays live at or below the national poverty line, *kais pagi makan pagi*. Approximately 75% of the B40 are Malays, facing underemployment and dependent on government subsidies to survive. 7.2 million Malaysians are BR1M recipients.

So, what has gone wrong and what is holding us back?

Kita menghadapi kenyataan bahawa sedangkan Dasar Ekonomi Baru telah memberikan segala bantuan dan sokongan kepada orang Melayu, kita tetap gagal mencapai matlamat. Hakikat ini tidak boleh dinafikan.

Why are they still in the bottom rungs of the economy? Therein lies the accusation that if only they took advantage of the considerable assistance given to them, they will prosper.

And the myth of the lazy Malay has been replaced with the myth of the dependent Malay. And is this accusation justified? *Tak tumbuh tak melata, tak sungguh orang tak kata*. Where does the myth come from?

Why does the notion of the lazy and dependent Malay persist till this day? Why is there an unwavering belief that Malays, and Bumiputeras as a whole, are not successful? *Ada asap, ada api*. Is this justified?

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY:

We have to know our history in order to learn from it.

In order to understand where the stereotype of the lazy Malay comes from, we must confront the history of our nation and our people. We have been criticised by Munshi Abdullah, Za'ba, and an endless list of British colonialists including Winstedt, Raffles, Swettenham, etc, who spoke about us in condescending and often patronising terms.

We have been described as indolent, lazy, "incapable of any labour apart from the cultivation of paddy fields" (George Leith).

Many of us condemned these critics and are angry at these derogatory descriptions. And we are not alone – all across the globe, there is an uprising in indigenous groups standing up against the trope of the "lazy native", at least in the colonial context.

Our own culture too seems to recognise our weaknesses and failings. We Malays say we are not lazy, and we call it slander. But look closely at the words we use in describing ourselves. We may not be outright calling ourselves lazy, but for a long time we have been degrading ourselves albeit articulated through poetry and metaphors.

Why are there so many pantuns, gurindams, syairs, sajak, and peribahasas about the Malays' poverty and laziness? These writings are synonymous with Malay culture, giving voice to issues that are prevalent in Malay society, acting as guidance, advice, criticism, censure, sarcasm, and innuendos that allude to Malay habits and practice.

Foreigners did not coin *kais pagi makan pagi, buai lajulaju, sorong papan tarik papan*. We created *Pak Kadok, Pak Pandir, Pak Belalang, Mat Jenin, Si Tanggang and Si Luncai*. These are our own observations and reflections of our weaknesses and faults, within our own communities.

Seni-seni bahasa dan cerita inilah yang menjadi pengangkut segala nasihat dan amaran daripada golongan orang Melayu. Orang Melayu jarang biadap, selalunya menyindir secara halus, melalui kiasan dan hiperbola bagi mengelakkan perasaan kecil hati. *Budi bahasanya tidak terkira, Kurang ajarnya tetap santun, Jika menipu masih bersopan* (Usman Awang). Tetapi tuduhan dan sindiran itu tetap wujud, cuma perlu dibaca isi tersiratnya.

The Malays coined terms like *Minah Karan, Mat Rempit, surat terbang, loya buruk, merepek, shiok sendiri, buta perut, sentap, kutu, kutu Embun, menang sorak* and these are our preoccupations.

Melatah is a Malay word and has been described as a specifically Malay condition. We created new words like *lepak* and *sabo*, which have made their way into the Oxford Dictionary. *Merepek* may be next to follow.

These are the ways in which we are describing ourselves on a daily basis, not by academicians and foreigners writing about us.

Before fighting with the others who are calling us lazy, we must look inwards to our own community. We must fix our own problems and not blame others for our failings.

We like to quote Melaka and its success. But its success resulted in the Portuguese conquest, and that of the Dutch and British after them. I urge you to read, to learn about their accomplishments, and more importantly, to understand where we went wrong.

Melaka was world famous, and traders came from all across the world to do business there. So many languages were spoken to ensure that global trade could be conducted.

We take pride in the Melaka Empire, speaking of it in equal terms as we refer to those of the Romans, the Ottomans, the British, the Moguls, and the Mongols. But these Empires are long gone. They are a part of history now.

And we must understand how the Malays got the title of the 'lazy native'.

With the British companies and later the Chinese and Indians doing modern businesses and running the import-export businesses, the Malays retreated from the towns and sold their lands.

Colonial policies discouraged us from being commercial landowners during the rubber and tin mining booms, and being out in the rural areas meant we lost out on important businesses opportunities. We were relegated to farming and fishing, and even that without having full control over our industry and earnings.

The Malays were not exposed to the capitalist economy.

Despite this, there were some exceptions. In Perak, we had Ngah Ibrahim, an exceptional Malay businessman. And what happened to him? We have to know our history in order to learn from it.

In Johor, a Syed Alsagoff, a Singaporean Arab was a notorious businessman and Pulau Kukup was once his. Syed Omar Alsagoff was a successful businessman. In the 40s, Utusan was debating whether the local Arabs were Malays.

In Perak, there was Syed Musa, an 18th Century Malay businessman who made his money in pepper plantations.

This is not to say that successful Malays are a thing of the past.

In our recent history, we have Ungku Abdul Aziz Ungku Abdul Hamid, a famed economist. We have Maarof Zakaria, the first Malay banker, who established the Malay National Bank back in the 1950s.

We had the likes of HM Shah, Tan Sri Osman Talib, Raja Ahmad, Raja Khalid, Tengku Ariff and Syed Kechik. I was lucky to have met them and learnt from them. You should read about them, learn from their successes and think about how to practice their lessons in your own endeavours.

We have our folk heroes. The likes of P Ramlee, Saloma, Syed Ahmad Syed Jamal (artist), Ibrahim Hussein (artist), Shahnnon Ahmad (writer), Abdullah Hussain (writer), Abdul Rahim Kajai (journalist), Abdul Samad Ismail (Pak Samad, journalist), Ghani Minhat (footballer), Mokhtar Dahari (footballer), Ismail Marjan (badminton), Abdullah Piruz (badminton), the Sidek brothers (badminton), Shamsiah Fakeh (nationalist), Aishah Ghani (nationalist), Puteh Mariah (nationalist), Ibu Zain (nationalist) and Khatijah Sidek (nationalist) were success stories in their chosen fields.

We can take comfort that the Malays are not all a lost cause when we see the examples above.

Despite the constraints placed on rural Malays, did you know that in the 1920s, Malay smallholders contributed to about 15% of the total world rubber production?

However, I caution against looking back on the past with the lens of nostalgia and wistfulness. What worked for them may not work for you today. Times have changed, so must we.

So, who are the lazy Malays?

We have the padi farmers, who are doing backbreaking work on a daily basis. We have the fishermen, who are toiling away on the rough seas while the rest of us are lying warm in bed. We have the ladies who sell our morning nasi lemak, and the people who are up long before subuh to run the bus and train services to ensure our daily commute goes smoothly.

Can we, in good conscience, call any of these people lazy? I think not. Nor do I think our PM was referring to any of them when he called us lazy.

Although we have produced many good professionals, managers and executives, they are still employees and wage earners. The idea of encouraging Malays to do business was to create a new generation of entrepreneurs. In this respect, we have not been particularly successful. Perhaps it is in our culture. We were removed from the capitalist economy in our past, and seem content not to break out.

*Walaupun sudah mengenal universiti,
Masih berdagang di rumah sendiri.*

It is the failure of this Malay entrepreneur class that disappoints the PM. He can only conclude that after all the helping hand given through MARA, PERNAS, UDA and the like, there is still no discernible Malay entrepreneur class.

They were given APs and they sold that. They were given contracts and they sub them out. They were given licenses and they leased or sold them as well. They were given loans at attractive rates and they used the money to buy fancy cars. They were given shares and they sold those too, and then asked for more.

They did not know how to appreciate the opportunities placed in their laps. *Bagai kera mendapat bunga*. The practice of Bumiputras selling their contracts to non-Bumiputeras, and the stereotype of the Malay sleeping partner is so pervasive that we even have a term for it – the Ali Baba partnership. And we all know who Ali is. The term Ali Baba reflects the reality of the Malay businessman. Then there is *meniaga atas angin*.

Sekarang, BR1M telah menjadi candu. Cash telah menjadi king. King itu mesti ada berbillion ringgit. King menjadi penipu dan pencuri. Sedangkan penyokong kangkong terus menyokong King. Rakyat naik benci, cash ke mana, king ke mana.

Rakyat mahukan pemimpin yang beramanah, bertanggungjawab, pentingkan rakyat dan negara. Pada 9 Mei 2018, rakyat telah bebaskan rakyat. Rakyat merdeka semula.

Tiba-tiba, kita dengar suara sumbang yang mengatakan bahawa jika mahu kekalkan kuasa, mesti ada kontrak. Rupanya, masih ada fikiran lama dalam Malaysia Baru.

So can we blame others when we ourselves sell our souls for a fast buck?

Why? Because they are lazy, they want to make a fast buck without putting in the sweat and tears, their time and energy. Every Malay businessman thinks that all he needs is one contract and he is set for life. In search of quick wealth, they taint their own race.

But this alone does not explain why we are still lagging behind.

The reasons are varied and we will need a whole symposium to analyse, and probably will still not come to a conclusion.

However, the best way to challenge and destroy the label of “lazy” placed on us is to work hard and show success. Complaints and anger will not change other people's view of us. Results and achievements will.

Yes there are lazy Malays and yes there are also many hardworking Malays. There is a new breed of young Malays wanting to prove the notion of the lazy Malay wrong.

I have spent the past few months travelling across the country, visiting many states and in that time I found quite a number of our unsung heroes. It would be impossible to name them all here, but what I want to convey to you all is that I am very impressed with them.

These young heroes are involved a variety of sectors, but most of the successes I have seen are in agriculture. Their produce ranges from bananas, pineapples, watermelons, figs, durian, maize orchids, and chillies. Many rear goats, cows, fish, and implement creative ways to run their businesses. They earn good income, some in millions.

Others still are doing well in the technology sector, with one group manufacturing drones. I am very proud and happy to see so many successful Malays. We must learn from them, help others become like them.

We read about 6,000 young padi farmers in Kedah and Perlis, some of them own combined harvesters, lorries and cultivate vast padi area. They are entrepreneurs who love the sawah. We should cheer them on.

And these success stories are not confined to men alone. I was pleasantly surprised to come across many successful business women. I have found them to be more determined, more disciplined, more hardworking, and more focused. If you ask me, I think that our women will do much better from now on.

Once upon a time, we used to be surprised with the Kelantanese women and marvel at their business acumen. But now, we find them everywhere. We salute their successes, and we should encourage and support them as they can redeem our race by challenging the myth of lazy Malays.

In the spirit of these successful Malays, I urge young Malays to go out there and plan what you want to do. Execute properly and monitor the progress. If you are determined to succeed, then you will find a way to succeed. Ada padi semua kerja jadi, ada beras semua kerja deras tapi buat secara buta tuli kita tahu apa akan jadi.

Once successful, you deserve to be proud of yourself as you have contributed to the success of our economic transformation that brings unity, stability, and that proves to the world that our people can succeed in a multi-racial society.

CHALLENGES FOR THE MALAYS:

Yes, there are Malays that prove that with hard work, tenacity and passion, they can compete with the best of them. But the Malay society as a whole faces many challenges.

Firstly, we must discuss the plague of corruption. Within our own ranks, we are faced with traitors. Harapkan pagar. Just as the Melaka Empire was brought to its knees by the work of Si Kitol and Raja Mendeliar, the Malays of today face an enemy from within: those within our community who seek to enrich themselves by corrupt means, and who are happy to leave our fellow Malays languishing in poverty.

*Pabila raja dengan kerenah,
Pabila gundik menabur fitnah,
Pabila pembesar kurang amanah,
Pabila kepercayaan rakyat kian punah,
Itulah tandanya Melaka akan musnah.*

And Melaka musnah.

Secondly, our culture. We are known for our manners and rich culture, but there is also a passivity in not disturbing the status quo and accepting whatever fate that befalls us. The feudal system entrenched through the centuries has caused us to be submissive and compliant.

But we should not be prisoners of our past. Break away from the feudal mentality of servitude. Have pride in yourselves, you are no longer enslaved. Our education should break us free.

Our interpretation of Islam and as practised here is that we have to accept our fate as takdir, as qada' and qadar, and that the hereafter will be better.

But Allah will not help those who do not help themselves. Islam teaches us to do well in this world and prepare for the hereafter. We repeated this same prayers this morning.

Islam encourages us to do better, how do we give zakat, do charity, and perform the Hajj? All these exhortations imply that we must work hard and earn an honest living to be able to help ourselves and to help others.

Islam and the Malays are deeply intertwined, but they are not one and the same. We must learn from our regional heritage, our cultural background, to understand why we are the way we are and what we can do to take our country and our people forward. Read, learn about this history, and spread it to others. It is important to know where we come from.

Thirdly, is our sense of insecurity. Why are we so insecure? We have a history of achievements.

We built great trading empires. We built Lembah Bujang, and our cousins across the seas built Borobudur, the biggest Buddhist temple in the world. Imagine the skills needed to succeed in those endeavours.

We have our manuscripts that record and preserve our intellectual and literary heritage. Incidentally, many of these Malay manuscripts are in the British Library, and it is Singapore that made the effort of curating an exhibition of it.

We speak of the trading prowess of Melaka, but we were also famous as boat builders and sailors. We were a maritime nation, and Malays were seafaring people. It was said that Enrique of Melaka or Henry the Black, the first to circumnavigate the globe, was a Malay named Panglima Awang.

Even the word "jong" is a Malay word. Our word for motherland is *tanah air*. We are comfortable on land and in water. What does this mean for the modern Malay? What lessons can we take from this?

Parameswara, the founder of Melaka, developed the ports, cultivated the lands with crops, and established a system of sea and land patrols. There was a system of laws. What can we learn from his tenacity and bravery?

Che Siti Wan Kembang, a legendary Kelantanese queen, was an excellent businesswoman. But what do we know of Che Siti herself? What else can we learn from her and the tales of prowess in business and in battle?

Kampung Datuk Keramat is a famously Malay area, but how many of us know the origins of the name Datuk Keramat? Kampung Kerinchi? Who was Abdullah Hukum?

Even songs like *Geylang Si Paku Geylang* – incidentally, do we know the original meaning of *Geylang*?

Chan Mali Chan, *Di Tanjong Katong*, *Bengawan Solo*, *Rasa Sayang*, *Tanah Pusaka* and patriotic songs offer us insight into our cultural background, and our shared heritage with our neighbouring countries.

These songs also have life lessons within them. Incidentally, my good friend and neighbour from Alor Star wrote the lyrics of *Biar Putih Tulang, Jangan Putih Mata*. If we do not work hard, be productive, and produce results, both mata and tulang will be putih and we know what a white flag signifies.

I would like to emphasise that knowledge is our greatest asset. There is a saying, those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. *Kusut di hujung, balik ke pangkal*. We the Malays have forgotten a great deal of our history. We must go back to the source in order to tackle the problem.

What has happened to us since?

There are 20 million Bumiputeras, and 1 million professionals in various fields. So for every 20 Bumiputras, we have 1 Bumiputra graduate. We have succeeded in producing graduates, but we continue to lag behind, where the majority of unemployed graduates are Malays. Does this mean that our universities have failed to produce the right quality of graduates?

Are these graduates unable to convince themselves, or at least their parents, that Bumis having nothing to fear in this country? That Bumis can compete successfully with the rest of our fellow Malaysians?

Are we thinking critically and logically, or have we allowed our emotions to determine our decisions? Have our minds gone amok? *Sebab pulut santan binasa, sebab mulut badan binasa*.

And worse still, we seem to encourage discrimination without factual grounds. Most recently, we objected the ratification of ICERD, which is not even a law. It is merely a convention. Even with 1 million graduates, we are still not confident in ourselves and our abilities. We fear our neighbours, our fellow citizens, and feel insecure about our position in our own country. What does this say about us?

Parallel to this has been the new tone of racist tendencies post-May 13. I shall mention this an “aside”; as UiTM pursues academic excellence for Bumiputeras, will it, as a dignified institution, be oblivious to growing racism? Are we going to gloss over wrongdoings and injustices in favour of Bumiputera-first policies?

Are you going to remain in your ivory tower, isolated from the rest of your fellow citizens? That you remain in your own racial bubble?

LESSONS FOR TODAY:

In this section of my speech, I would like to give you some advice that has worked for me in my experience.

Knowledge: Ilmu pelita hidup. We must read more, seek knowledge, and be open to different sources of knowledge – these are the wise words of our forefathers, our prophets, our people. Just as we can learn within the confines of a university, we can learn from the gurindams and sajak through which our predecessors have given us guidance. Education can come in many forms, and we must seek it in all of its facets. But most importantly, learn to assess this knowledge in logical manner with a critical mind. *Buang yang keruh, ambil yang jernih.*

Nabi Muhammad s.a.w. said, “*Seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim, male and female*”. This hadith tells us that we as Muslims must read, acquire knowledge, practice critical thinking and apply logical thought processes. With knowledge, we will understand how to approach and solve problems.

The first revelation brought to Nabi Muhammad s.a.w. by Jibril was Iqra' – Read. Allah instructs us to read, and through reading Allah teaches mankind what we do not know.

These are the things that students must be taught and must embody in their daily life. *Isi dada, bekal berjalan.*

In all the discussions that have been going on, has any of you read Syed Hussein Alatas's “The Myth of the Lazy Native”? Or Edward Said's “Orientalism”? Or Usman Awang's poem, “Melayu”?

Hard Work: Habis akal, baru tawakal. Naik tangga dari bawah. If we do not put in the effort ourselves, it is unlikely that Allah will smile upon us. The lazy Malay myth must be dispelled by our own hands.

Business: I too, entered business, and my first venture was a failure. I am not proud of it, in fact I feel very *malu*. Now we hear malu apa boss? *Melayu tidak perlu malu. Ajaran kepada kita hilang malu hilang iman.* But I have to admit that my failure was a blessing in disguise. My failure was my greatest teacher. I have learnt more from my failures, about my values, my strengths and my weaknesses. I advise you to accept your failures with humility, do not blame others and give excuses.

There is a Japanese saying, that if we fall down seven times we must rise eight. In Malaysia, we say *hendak seribu daya, tak hendak seribu dalih*. We too must rise more times than we fall. A loss can be turned into a lesson if you want to learn. And we must learn if we want to succeed.

And make sure you have a clear plan when going into business. Prepare business plan from A to Z to make sure you achieve your objective.

Punctuality: *Masa itu emas.* Kita yang beragama Islam solat mesti menurut waktu, lima kali sehari. Pada bulan puasa, kita berbuka puasa tepat mengikuti waktu. Malahan temujanji, waktu bekerja, dan menghadiri upacara, kita mengamalkan prinsip "*janji Melayu*" dan *jam karat*. Quran mengingatkan tentang masa tetapi kita tidak hirau. Surah Al-Asr mengajar kita tentang kepentingan masa dan menjaga waktu. Jika tidak, kita akan kerugian.

Global Citizen: *Masuk kandang kambing mengembek, masuk kandang kerbau menguak.* Read a lot, and read often. Stay up to date. Find things that interest you and do research on them. Learn global languages so that you may gain different perspectives and talk to people from other places.

We cannot be complacent. Many Malays seem insistent on living in a bubble. Our country cannot exist in a bubble amongst our global counterparts, let alone in our own communities. We must be open-minded. Otherwise, we will end up like the *katak di bawah tempurung* – stuck in our own world, not knowing what is going on around us.

Have a sense of direction and motivation in life. You must think about what is important to you, and how you will play your part in this world. We cannot be like *layang-layang yang putus tali*, confused and not knowing where to go. Live your life with a purpose, and act with good intentions.

Heritage: *Kacang lupakan kulit.* Learn from our history, our heritage, and those who came before us. I've mentioned many examples of successful Malays in my speech. Read about them. And read about those who have failed as well, so that we may not repeat their mistakes.

Be truthful. Beware of *siakap senohong*, *gelama ikan duri*. We must have integrity with the way we carry ourselves. Honesty is a virtue that cannot be bought. To live an honest life is to live with peace of mind and a sense of justice. Maybe truth will hurt, and make others *jauh hati*, but it is important. Though others will not always appreciate honesty, they will always respect and trust you if you live your life truthfully.

Thrifty/Saving (Jangan Membazir): *Sikit-sikit lama-lama jadi bukit.* We must not be wasteful, whether it is money, time, or opportunities. Our country is rich with resources, and many opportunities are open for Bumiputras to do well. We must seize these changes, and use them wisely. Do not squander what is given and earned.

Grateful. We are taught in Islam to *bersyukur*. We must be thankful for what we have, and for the help we receive. *Pulau Pandan jauh ke tengah.* Remember those who have helped you, and help them or others in return.

Be Good to Others: *Gajah mati meninggalkan tulang, harimau mati meninggalkan belang, manusia mati meninggalkan?*

So be a good Muslim. I advise you to not just read, but also understand the Al-Fatihah and practice the teachings. Find the right path that leads to success.

CLOSING REMARKS:

We are the product of our history and our past.

When the PM says that Malays are lazy, he meant those that took advantage of all the help given, threw away the opportunities and continue asking for more.

When the PM says we are lazy, he wants to provokes us, make us angry, to rise up and prove him wrong. He wants the best from you. He is challenging you to recognise your own weakness and work hard towards a better future. He wants you to prove that you don't need crutches, that you can stand on your own, proud and defiant.

Tun M, by his example, shows you that even age should not be an excuse. Tun Mahathir bekerja 18 jam sehari. Cuti umum pun masih bekerja, mentadbir sebuah negara.

Melayu patut bangga dengan kejayaan dan kegigihan beliau, satu dunia telah mengakui keupayaan beliau. Use him as an example.

Kita pula bagaimana? Melayu boleh berjaya, tetapi usaha itu wajib untuk mencapai kejayaan. Berjalan sampai ke batas, belayar sampai ke pulau.

Since we are lagging in the economy, our jihad must be to improve it. Our success is our nation's success. Our failure will pull down the nation, and this must not be allowed to happen as it will result in disaster for all.

For Malaysia to succeed, the Bumiputeras must succeed. *Bersatu kita teguh, bercerai?.* Malaysians as a whole must do well for our country to progress socially and economically.

Together, the Malays fought against the Malayan Union and defeated the British. Together with the other races, we defeated the communist threat, and brought independence for our country. We were united against the Confrontation. *Berat sama dipikul, ringan sama dijinjing.*

We were doing well until our politicians lost their way and became greedy, uncaring, full of themselves, and worse, they became thieves. *Rakyat mengeluh lelah dan sakit, sedikit diberi, banyak diungkit. Bagaikan melepas anjing tersepit, dah jadi pemimpin rakyat digigit.*

Our country was saved by the Rakyat on the 9th of May 2018. The Rakyat knew when to reject the thieves, to draw the line when enough was enough. But Malay votes were divided. What does that say about ourselves?

Are we not ashamed that we as a race did not totally reject kleptocracy, that in the name of race and religion, we did not mind the wholesale plundering of our nation? I like to remind Malaysian Muslims especially myself about **Surah Al Imran, ayat 134-135**, "And those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allah loves the doers of good (to others). And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins. And who forgives sins but Allah? And they persist not knowingly in what they do." and another **Surah At- Tin, ayat 4-8**, "We have certainly created man in the best of mould; then we return him to the lowest of the low. Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds, theirs is a never-ending reward. So what yet causes you to deny the Reward and the Punishment? Is not Allah is The Most Merciful?".

We must show the world that Malays boleh, and when Malays boleh, Malaysia boleh. This will once and for all destroy the myth of the lazy and dependent Malay.

For this to happen, we must return to the core values of honesty, hard work, and integrity. We must seek to acquire knowledge, perform well, be industrious, have a sense of modesty, and pride in our achievements. Think logically, plan and execute effectively for your success.

If you fail, take responsibility and ownership over your failures, and have a sense of shame. When you are successful, live with humility and share your knowledge with others to keep the positive cycle going. Bawa resmi padi.

And importantly, we must act quickly. All of the advice I have given in this speech, I urge you to act upon it immediately. *Kita tidak mahu nasi menjadi bubur. Instead, remember that siapa cepat dia dapat.*

We decide our future. We must change as Allah will not change any society that does not take steps to change themselves first.

Do not fear. Stay united. *Bersatu kita teguh.* Be a Malaysian first, a Malaysian second, and a Malaysian last. *Say no to racism.* Kenapa harus bimbang dan takut bayang-bayang sendiri? Perlu Yakin, Berani, Tekun.

One last thing – don't waste too much time on social media!