



Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute
Dedicated To Creating A Better Society

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Poverty in Malaysia: Reality vs Perception

Nation-Building Conversations with Tun Dr Daim Zainuddin

Bandar Sunway, 27 November 2019 – The Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) organised the second series of the Nation Building Conversations featuring an exclusive conversation with YABhg Tun Dr Daim Zainuddin, the Chairman of the Council of Eminent Persons at the Sunway University. Themed “Poverty in Malaysia: Reality vs Perception”, the event convened senior public officials, policymakers, captains of industries, representatives from the private sector and academia to explore and identify the gap in Malaysia’s poverty measurement, and employ a more holistic measurement to ensure that poverty eradication efforts could be carried out more effectively.

The event was conceived as the preliminary report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Professor Philip Alston released on 23rd August 2019 states that Malaysia’s poverty rate could be between 15% and 20%. This is indeed a troubling revelation and it has sparked intense debate among the academia as well as the public in general.

This rate also contradicts the official statistics of the government where it was shown that only 0.4% of households living under the poverty threshold. This raises questions on the absolute poverty concept used to measure the Poverty Line Income (PLI) and whether or not it reflects the actual reality of poverty situation or otherwise.

The event seeks to address the need for a multidimensional approach to be adopted by Malaysia especially in a changing environment and solicits the use of a broad spectrum of variables to conceptualise poverty in a more inclusive way in Malaysia.

In his welcome address, Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO, the Chairman of the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) highlighted his support for the Government’s Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 that was announced recently where he believes that it does not only lay out the goals of poverty eradication, but most importantly, spells out the pathways towards achieving them. In addition, he also stressed on the need for corporations to make a difference in the world, defining its purpose beyond just making profits.

The event was then followed with an exclusive conversation with Tun Dr Daim Zainuddin in which he underscored the vast economic progress that Malaysia has achieved since independence and believes that the Government has been working tirelessly to improve the livelihoods of all Malaysians since then. The Former Chairman of the Council of Eminent Persons (CEP) also emphasised on the importance of reviewing economic policies to ensure all Malaysians, irrespective of race have a fair chance to participate in the nation’s growth and development. The exclusive conversation was moderated by Ms Melissa Ong, Chief Executive Officer of ASLI.



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Nation Building Conversations is an engagement platform curated exclusively to enable leaders present their vision and also hear from a live audience, where that vision can be better enhanced and shared. This engagement session will feature captains of industries, "movers and shakers" in Malaysia, regionally and globally; from all walks of life, who will present their vision for a better society and better country, for a better tomorrow. This series will cover the spectrum of social, economic and business agendas.

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About Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI)

The Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute or in short "ASLI" is Malaysia's leading independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit think-tank. Since its establishment in 1993, ASLI has established a renowned reputation as the definitive link between the public sector, the private sector, academia and civil society in pursuit of its mission of creating a better society. ASLI is owned and governed by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF). We curate thought-provoking and intellectual dialogues in an effort to bring change in public policies for the betterment of society. We provide strategic analysis and advise on critical issues impacting the nation and beyond. In the wider Asia Pacific region, we capitalise on our influential network to harness best practices and connect strategic partners across APAC on highest-value business investment and trade opportunities to foster bilateral relations and economic growth. Further information of ASLI is available at www.asli.com.my

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