

Kit Siang says youths in Malaysia must have greater voice, cites Sabah's Veveonah as example

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DAP's Lim Kit Siang advocates for more Malaysian youths in leadership roles as they have the most at stake for the future. — Picture by Shafwan Zaidon

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 16 — DAP's Lim Kit Siang has urged the Opposition to focus on the challenges of the next general election instead of trying to bring down the Perikatan Nasional government under Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He also advocated for more Malaysian youths in leadership roles as they have the most at stake for the future.

"We are in a new era and we must be prepared for new ways to address the nation's problems," Lim said in a statement.

The Iskandar Puteri MP reiterated his proposal last month to the federal and Sabah state governments to set up a task force headed by Universiti Sabah Malaysia student Veveonah Mosibin.

"The task force should conduct a survey in Sabah to ensure that having to spend 24 hours on a tree top or causing the collapse of a suspension bridge in the Sabah interior for youths to get better internet access for their education would become a thing of the past.

"This must have come as a shock to many who asked how can a national task force be entrusted to an 18-year-old girl," he said, adding that the governments have so far maintained a 'stony silence'.

Lim argued that Malaysia would make world news if Veveonah is appointed the chair of the Federal-Sabah State Government Task Force to resolve internet access issues in all the remote kampungs in Sabah interior to facilitate online education during the Covid-19 epidemic.

"It will be a triple testimony that Malaysia values the contribution of youths, women and the minorities to resolve national problems, particularly those faced by the young generation of students over online education.

"Questions may be asked whether an 18-year-old Veveonah is qualified to chair a Federal-State Government Task Force to address the digital divide in the interior of Sabah," he said.

On his part, Lim said Veveonah has proven her resolute and determination by spending time in a tree-top to gain better internet access to sit for an online examination.

"I have full confidence of her qualification to head such a task force to combat digital poverty in Sabah's interior. It will be to resolve a problem she herself had to overcome," he said.

Lim also cited other young leaders, including Finland's 34-year old prime minister Sanna Marin, New Zealand's 37-year old prime minister Jacinda Ardern, Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman who became Malaysia's Youth and Sports Minister aged 25, among others, as examples.

"I see no reason why 18-year-old Veveonah Mosibin cannot become Chairperson of the Federal-State Government Task Force to address the problem of digital divide in Sabah.

"It is time that the millennials be empowered with more trust, responsibility and power as 54 per cent of Malaysia's population are below 30 years of age and some 70 per cent of the population are below 40 years of age," he said.