



Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006 - 2010

**Recommendation
from
Malaysian Indian Grassroots**



German-Malaysian Partnership
**Friedrich Naumann
stiftung**

Community Centres for the Empowerment of Indian Women in Malaysia



A project co-funded by the European Union

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the European Union funded project '*Community Centres for the Empowerment of Indian Women in Malaysia*', ERA Consumer Malaysia, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and The Malaysia Indian Educational Development Association (TheMind) organized a forum with grass roots and community leaders from the Indian Malaysian community to gather inputs for the 9th Malaysia Plan.

The objective of the forum entitled '*Ninth Malaysia Plan - Voices of Malaysian Indian Grassroots*' was to generate views, ideas and recommendation concerning Indian community's issues and concerns to be incorporated into the 9th Malaysia Plan. The feedback from the grass roots are put forward to the Government through this report in order to influence policies that will help improve the economic and social situation of the Indian Malaysians.

The forum brought together distinguished panelist and participants comprising academicians, corporate leaders, business people, senior civil servants, civil society activists and other local community leaders.



PRIORITY AREAS

'The average household income of more than fifty percent of the Indians in Malaysia is below RM 2,000. The continuance of social ills and poverty among them is due in large measure to subjugation and marginalization' AVAL Newsletter, ERA Consumer Malaysia.

In the globalization era, we, Malaysians of Indian origin, believe that the only way to stay abreast with the nation's aspiration to be fully developed by year 2020 is to focus on:

- a) Improving the social standing
- b) Increasing the economic equity
- c) Improving the education level and human capital development

Hence, we put forward recommendation in these three priority areas.



TABLE OF RECOMMENDATION

1. IMPROVING THE SOCIAL STANDING

Problems/Issues	8 th Malaysia Plan	Shortfalls	Recommendation for 9 th Malaysia Plan
<p>1.1 Social Ills</p> <p>Dysfunctional families, displacement, migration and marginalization of estate and rural Malaysian Indians resulting in crime and substance abuse</p>	<p>1.54 (8MP): A social action plan, Pelan Tindakan Sosial (PINTAS), formulated in 1998, to provide a framework for integrating the various components of social development in the country into a coordinated system, will be implemented nationwide. PINTAS will focus on the promotion, prevention, intervention and</p>	<p>Disbursement of financial allocation was slow and has affected the effectiveness of the programmes.</p>	<p>Allocation of RM 4 million a year for NGOs to run community centres to advise and address the socio-economic issues of Indians. The allocation will be used to build the necessary infrastructure and to train the counselors. The community centres should also be used to house abused victims temporarily.</p> <p>Establish community correction centre for young and first-time offenders at</p>



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	<p>rehabilitation aspects in addressing social issues Government formulated the National Social Policy and established the Social Councils at Federal, State and District levels.</p>	<p>Housing plans under the 8th Malaysia Plan was not implemented as planned for Indian migrating from the estates.</p>	<p>high risk neighbourhoods especially in areas prone to gang fights and violence.</p> <p>Increase training programmes for Indian based social groups at the Institut Sosial Malaysia, aimed at improving the human capital.</p> <p>Allocation of more places in Skills Training Institute for Indians youths who are school drop-outs.</p> <p>Implement housing schemes for displaced estate workers and rural-urban migrating Indians</p> <p>Implement those housing plans which was not effectively implemented in 8th Malaysia Plan</p> <p>There should be accountability and transparencies in allocation of houses for the poor displaced.</p>
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<p>1.2 Urban Poverty</p> <p>A large portion of the Malaysian Indian community (at least 30%) are facing problems in accessing opportunities provided by government agencies.</p>	<p>3.42 (8MP): To address pockets of poverty among households on urban centres and its periphery, the Government will also implement programmes such as the provision of housing and amenities as well as opportunities to generate income.</p>	<p>After the Mid Term Review of the 8th Malaysia Plan, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government identified specific programmes such as the Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme etc, which was delayed or not effectively implemented.</p>	<p>The Urban Poverty alleviation programme must be implemented in the urban areas with large number of Indians.</p> <p>Government must provide financial aid and other form of assistance, such as temporary job placement without prejudice.</p>
<p>1.3 Domestic violence, substance abuse, high divorce rate</p> <p>Large numbers of Indians are involved in domestic violence and substance abuse. Indians constitute about 14% of the cases referred to Pusat Serenti Malaysia.</p>			<p>Woman, Family and Community Development Ministry should organize educational talks on child upbringing, family values, anger and stress management, sex and substance abuse for all Malaysians. Priority should be given to high-risk families.</p> <p>More financial and resource allocation from the Woman, Family and Community</p>



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<p>Number of Indian couples going through divorce is alarming.</p>			<p>Development Ministry for victims of violence, including resource allocation for Tamil speaking counselors.</p> <p>Increase allocation to improve the number of TV reality shows on family values.</p> <p>Allow and encourage Parent-Teacher-Association to organize course on parenting skills for parents.</p> <p>Stringent enforcement of sale of liquor to under-aged</p> <p>Allocation to set-up more easily accessible Crisis Care Centre, especially at high-risk neighbourhood.</p> <p>Review drug rehabilitation programme and ensure personnel involved have adequate training.</p> <p>Domestic Violence Act must be properly enforced,</p>
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			<p>taking into consideration sensitivity to gender and ethnic issues.</p> <p>Compulsory for Indians to attend pre-marriage courses.</p> <p>Increase allocation to train marriage registrars, enabling them to counsel and give effective advise for newly married couples.</p>
1.4 Improvement in child care centre			<p>Government to subsidize day-care centre for those classified under low income group.</p>
1.5 Single parenthood			<p>Enforcement of policy which provides assistance for single parent to register the birth of their child, particularly for single mothers, and set-up of child-care centres.</p> <p>Job opportunities and subsistence allowance for single mothers without employment.</p>



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			Provision to have Indian representative for single parent in HAWA.
<p>1.6 Birth certificates, identification certificates, marriage certificates</p> <p>Many Indians are having difficulty or are not aware of the importance of obtaining identification certificates, birth certificates and marriage certificates.</p>			<p>Government to embark on nationwide exercise to register people without birth certificates, marriage certificates and identification certificates.</p> <p>Relevant Ministries to assist and be more friendly to registration of child born out of wedlock</p> <p>All Malaysian born Indian must be entitled for citizenship. The Government should increase the Amnesty period for registration of births.</p> <p>To enforce awareness talks in Tamil schools and through media on the importance of obtaining</p>



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			<p>birth certificates, identification certificates and marriage certificates.</p> <p>Government must allow NGOs to collect birth certificates application forms.</p> <p>Government should allow registration of birth certificates in Tamil schools and registered temples.</p> <p>Policy discriminating a child born out of wedlock in obtaining identification certificate must be reviewed.</p>
1.7 Influence of movies			<p>Implement strict Censorship Law for foreign movies (Tamil/Hindi) shown in Malaysia.</p>
1.8 Role of media (audio, print)			<p>Enforce media to screen more shows with moral and human values.</p>



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			<p>Allocate funds to produce educational programs in Tamil.</p> <p>Enforce the audio media to allocate time for sharing of information such as business and entrepreneurial opportunities, loans, skill training, facilities etc. available from various Ministries in all major languages including Tamil.</p> <p>Enforce policy on media to play the role of an educator on moral issues, HIV, substance abuse in all major languages, including Tamil.</p> <p>More widespread media dissemination on grant and financing schemes available via the media including Tamil.</p>
<p>1.9 Cultural and religious norms</p>			<p>A Non-Muslim who is married, must file for divorce prior to marrying a Muslim partner or conversion to Islam.</p>



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			<p>Allow non-Muslim spiritual based programs in media.</p> <p>Ministry of Cultural and Heritage to allocate more resources for Malaysian Indian cultural and heritage events for schools and religious centre.</p>
<p>1.10 Housing scheme</p> <p>Many Indians do not own a house in Malaysia.</p>			<p>Enforce quota to buy properties for low and medium housing schemes for Malaysian Indians proportional to the population.</p> <p>Implement rebates for Malaysian Indians.</p>



2. INCREASING THE ECONOMIC EQUITY

Problems/Issues	8 th Malaysia Plan	Shortfalls	Recommendation for 9 th Malaysia Plan
<p>2.1 Equity Participation</p> <p>Malaysian Indian's corporate equity ownership stands at 1.5%. It's the intention to double the Indian equity within the next 5 years.</p>	<p>4.18 (OPP3): In view of the low level of corporate equity ownership among Indians, attention will be given to increase their participation during the OPP3 period.</p> <p>3.55 (8MP): Measures will be taken to increase the Indian equity ownership to 3.0 per cent by 2010.</p> <p>3.54(8MP): National Unit Trust Funds (NUTF) will be established during the Plan period, to ensure a wider distribution of equity ownership among</p>	<p>No studies were conducted nor programmes developed to increase the equity of the Malaysian Indian community.</p>	<p>A comprehensive study must be undertaken and programmes developed to increase the Malaysian Indian equity to at least 3% by 2010.</p> <p>Educational and awareness programmes must be launched to promote savings and investment among Malaysian Indians.</p> <p>Enforce a special quota to be offered to the Indian community when IPOs of Government linked companies (GLC) are issued.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for Malaysian Indians</p>



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	Bumiputera and other disadvantaged groups.		on the Board of Directors of Government owned and other Government linked companies.
<p>2.2 Apprenticeship for small and medium scale industries</p> <p>The participation of Indians in small and medium scale industries is low. Problem is compounded by the difficulty in securing loans and business licenses.</p>	<p>3.55(8MP): Providing opportunities to young potential entrepreneurs to acquire and increase their knowledge, skills and management capability as well as through the provision of financial assistance.</p>		<p>Allocation of funds specifically for apprentice training for Malaysian Indians.</p> <p>Special access to small and medium business loans for Malaysian Indians.</p> <p>Relaxation of restriction to obtain license for Malaysian Indians in small business sectors and commercial vehicles.</p> <p>Allocate 8% places for Entrepreneur Training for Malaysian Indians.</p> <p>Train more Malaysian Indians as Trainers and resource person.</p>



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			<p>Providing adequate funding and incentives for Malaysian Indian small medium enterprises to improve and upgrade their ICT infrastructure and training.</p>
<p>2.3 Agriculture</p>			<p>Allocation of lands (2 Hectares per Indian family) who wishes to venture into agriculture.</p> <p>Allocation for more Malaysian Indians to join FELDA schemes.</p> <p>Promotion of agricultural opportunities must include Tamil audio and print media.</p> <p>Government should enable easy access to agriculture leases (land and infrastructure support) in all states to</p>



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			encourage modern agriculture.
2.4 Tourism			Provide allocation to develop Malaysian Indian fine arts. Incentives for hotels and resorts which give priority to local singers/local groups compared to overseas groups to perform at the premises.
2.5 Employment & Malaysian Indians in management The racial composition of staffs in Civil service and Government Linked Companies and in managerial positions differs greatly from the racial composition in Malaysia. This dents the career prospects of the Indian community.	1.27(OPP3):...non-Bumiputera will be encouraged to apply for jobs in the public sector. 3.66(8MP): Measures will be taken to improve the balance between Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera employment in the public and private sectors.	No specific targets No monitoring scheme established.	Equal opportunities in all sectors and at all levels in Government and Government Linked Companies, based on ethnic composition. Provide graduate training scheme based on ethnic composition. Retraining and priority for employment for marginalised plantation



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	Towards this end, non-Bumiputera will be encouraged to apply for jobs in the public sector, particularly in areas where they are under-represented.		workers Adequate publicity be made for job opportunities and training schemes especially in the Tamil Press and radio.
2.6 People with special needs (single parent, disabled and hard core poor)			Provide skill training and resources in cottage industries to assist single mothers to have revenue from skill job. Fair allocation of welfare and economic aid for old folks and the disabled, irrespective of ethnicity. Remove segregation of ethnicities in old folk homes and orphanages.
2.7 Service sector			Provide training and financial assistance to promote or upgrade franchise business for



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			Malaysian Indians.
2.8 Health			Allocation of funds and support to develop Ayurveda and traditional medicines.
2.9 Finance			Rehabilitation unit in Bank Negara and other banks must be opened to non-bumiputras for business restructuring. More allocation for BSN micro-credit loan for Malaysian Indians. Government to set up Business Mentor-Mentee Scheme and Vendor Development Scheme for all Malaysians.
2.10 Investment and wealth creation			Amanah Saham Wawasan 2020 and Amanah Saham Malaysia must have standardized benefits like Amanah Saham Bumiputera and Amanah Saham Nasional without quota.



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			<p>Government to enforce education on investment options and opportunities in all languages including Tamil.</p> <p>Incentives to encourage saving.</p>
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3. IMPROVING THE EDUCATION LEVEL AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Problems/Issues	8 th Malaysia Plan	Shortfalls	Recommendation for 9 th Malaysia Plan
<p>3.1 Tamil School Education</p> <p>Shortage of qualified teachers</p> <p>Very few Tamil schools have computer labs and the required infrastructure</p>			<p>Retired teachers to be re-employed.</p> <p>Improve teacher training facilities for Tamil School teachers.</p> <p>All Tamil Schools should be equipped with ICT Labs. ICT training starts from Standard 1.</p>



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<p>Large number of Tamil Schools are partially aided schools and have weak infra-structure.</p> <p>High failure rate (40%) for Bahasa Malaysia and English in UPSR</p> <p>Weak Tamil Education System structure</p> <p>Rancangan Makanan Tambahan</p> <p>School textbooks</p> <p>Counselling teachers</p>	<p>3.63(8MP):: ...Similarly, efforts will be undertaken to improve the performance of non-Bumiputera students in Bahasa Malaysia, particularly in vernacular schools.</p>	<p>No efforts were undertaken to improve the language proficiency in Tamil Schools.</p>	<p>Ensure ICT trained teachers for Tamil schools with more than 100 students. Also ensure 1 internet connection and 10 computers are provided.</p> <p>Government should re-categorize the partially aided schools as fully aided ones.</p> <p>Allocate RM50 million to renovate or rebuild Tamil Schools in poor conditions.</p> <p>Allocate funds for remedial classes for weak students.</p> <p>Implementation of special classes in Tamil schools as well.</p> <p>Initiate study of Tamil education system structure.</p> <p>Rancangan Makanan Tambahan to be given to</p>
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			<p>all Tamil school students.</p> <p>All Tamil school students must be given free text books irrespective of parent's income</p> <p>Train more Tamil speaking counseling teachers.</p>
<p>3.2 Pre-school</p> <p>Only 39.6% of 6 year old Indian children below the age of 6 have attended pre-school.</p>	<p>4.100(8MP)*:: ...the Ministry of Education will enhance its role in the coordination of pre-school programmes for children in the 5-6 age cohort to ensure that its coverage is expanded from 63.7 per cent in 2000 to at least 75% by 2005.</p>	<p>The coordination and implementation of pre-school in Tamils schools has been slow.</p>	<p>Implement pre-school education in all Tamil Primary Schools.</p>
<p>3.3 Primary school</p> <p>Students from National schools are not allowed to sit for Tamil paper in UPSR.</p>			<p>Open Tamil subject to all students, irrespective of type of school they attend to, to sit for the Tamil paper in UPSR.</p> <p>Include all mainstream</p>



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<p>Allocation of time to teach mainstream religion including Hinduism and spiritual programs in schools during school hours</p>			<p>religion in the teaching time-table.</p>
<p>3.4 Secondary school</p> <p>Poor performance of Indian students (around 27 percent leave the school system without completing their SPM studies)</p> <p>Remove class system to facilitate transition to secondary school is ineffective.</p>			<p>Government to establish MLVK classes in schools.</p> <p>Free secondary school education for all Malaysians.</p> <p>The remove class system should be reviewed to ensure smooth transition to secondary school.</p>
<p>3.5 Higher Education</p> <p>Number of seats allocated for Malaysian Indian population does not reflect the population demography of the country.</p>			<p>Allocation of places for Malaysian Indian in Matriculation courses, proportional to the ethnic composition.</p> <p>Allocation of places for Malaysian Indians in critical courses {medicine, engineering, pharmacy, dentistry,</p>



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<p>Limited scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate study in local and foreign universities</p>			<p>accountancy) should reflect the ethnic composition.</p> <p>Allocate financial resources to teach soft skills such as 'Effective Communication Skills' and 'Professional Image' in university.</p> <p>At least 8 percent of public university enrolments should be allocated to Malaysian Indians.</p> <p>STPM and Matriculation must be synchronized.</p> <p>Allocation of 8 percent of all government scholarships should be awarded to Malaysian Indians.</p>
<p>3.6 Quality teachers</p>			<p>Government to re-assess training standards for teachers.</p> <p>Ensure best teaching practices are taught in</p>



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			<p>teacher training colleges.</p> <p>Enforce multi-cultural training for teachers to respect others culture.</p>
<p>3.7 IT</p> <p>The ICT adoption of Malaysian Indians stands at 4.2% whereas the figure is more alarming for Malaysian Indian youths (1.9%).</p>	<p>4.45(OPP3): Promoting greater awareness and participation of the poor and the low-income groups in the knowledge-based economy, providing education and training in information and communication technology (ICT) and increasing access to infostructure, particularly in the rural areas and among the disadvantaged groups.</p>		<p>Create IT training community centres in poor urban neighbourhood, including estates.</p> <p>Equipping all Tamil schools with ICT infrastructure and teaching aid. All Tamil schools with more than 100 pupils must be provided with an internet connection and 10 computers.</p> <p>Allocation for Indian-based NGOs to establish ICT Training Centres.</p>
<p>3.8 Skill Training</p> <p>27% of Malaysian Indian children dropout from the secondary education</p>	<p>6.37(OPP3)*: The establishment of Community Colleges will</p>		<p>Allocation of 8% of available places for non-graduate skill training must be given to Malaysian Indian.</p>



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<p>before SPM.</p> <p>A large number are unable to get into other forms of skills training</p> <p>Only 4% of the total trainees in Industrial Training Institutes are Malaysian Indians.</p>	<p>also provide opportunities particularly to those who left the school system to join the labour market to further their education and training.</p> <p>4.71(8MP): The Government will also establish Community Colleges throughout the country to provide hands-on training for school drop-outs, school leavers, workers and the public.</p> <p>3.55(8MP): Special training programmes will be provided at Pusat GIATMARA and Community Colleges for the school leavers among the low-income Indian community.</p>		<p>Aggressive awareness campaign must be undertaken to ensure that all the available places in technical and vocational colleges for Malaysian Indians are taken up by the Malaysian Indian youths.</p>
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