

Charter for public service delivery

NST 18/2/08 PG 21

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PUTRAJAYA: The government has issued a document on *Public Service Commitments 2008: Towards A Customer-centric Malaysian Public Service* to improve the public service delivery system.

The document contains a set of promises the public service is readily making to the public.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan said the document was the result of co-operation and input from secretaries-general, directors-general and senior public officials.

One of the core commitments made for this year was to improve the service delivery at local authorities and land offices.

"Why you might ask? Simply because our local authorities are the nucleus of our society as they determine the standard of living and quality of life of the place we each choose for ourselves and our families," he said.

Malaysia today ranked well

internationally. In the 2007 World Competitiveness ranking, Kuala Lumpur was ranked eighth of 55 countries, sixth on government efficiency, fourth on business efficiency and 10th on infrastructure development.

In the World Bank's *Doing Business 2008*, Kuala Lumpur ranked 24th of 178 countries.

Given these achievements and global rankings, Sidek said "we should not be getting any more complaints of broken street lights and uncollected rubbish".

"We cannot be smelling clogged drains and tolerating broken pavement tiles, potholes or even non-responsive local authority staff."

He was speaking when opening a seminar, Master-class Place Branding, at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre here yesterday.

Sidek reminded civil servants to be ambitious in taking the country to the top 10 in terms of the World Bank's ranking by 2010.

With the literacy rate and resources the country is blessed with, Sidek said it was



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to be expected that these amenities would be taken for granted.

"However, anything less is a broken promise to our achievements. There must not and cannot be a reason for these complaints.

"Yet we read of it in letters to editors and emails. We must search our hearts and ask why this is still happening in the 21st century.

"Why haven't we moved up the value chain of service delivery at the local authorities?"

He posed a few other ques-

“What makes a business tick? What do we consider when choosing a place to call our home? What are the criteria of a place that will be the choice for our children's education and our own healthcare service preference?”

"Are the public amenities to the standards I aspire for myself, my children and grandchildren? Is this place as safe as home for me?"

"These questions come from the heartstrings of every one of us, because when it affects you individually, you will make sure the answers to all these questions are certainly

no less than a 'yes'."

Sidek said it was the duty and responsibility of local authorities, regardless of whether they were big or small, to deliver these things in the places they run.

"When we operate from a principle of 'we should treat others the way we want to be treated', that in itself will develop the competitive advantage due to our cities, districts, towns and municipalities. And we definitely can make that difference," he said.

Since local authorities were the front face of the public service, Sidek said they bear the

responsibility of carrying the brand effectively as place branding would take them to the basics — reputation, delivery standards and consistency.

He told local authorities to "deliver our promises and deliver them with consistency". Heads of local authorities and land offices must engage and consult stakeholders and stop frustrating them.

"We need to sell solutions and not products. Each solution must be tailor-made to suit all times and their staff must be trained.

"The traditional benevolent civil servant of 'I know what is good for you', no longer works," he said.

There are 144 local authorities in the country.

Sidek also said local authorities were customers themselves.

"All of us are customers to ourselves. As such, we must serve the customers well."

He also reminded all 1.2 million civil servants to work hard, saying there should be no end in their pursuit for excellence.