The Practice of Deliberative Democracy in the Temerloh Parliamentary Consultative Council (TPCC), Malaysia

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Abstract: This study attempts to analyse a shift in decision-making approach for Malaysia's local government. Since the 12th general election in 2008, people participation in decision-making process has become very important in order for the government to produce a people friendly public policy. Therefore, this study takes the opportunity to study a model of deliberative democracy which has been introduced through the Temerloh Parliamentary Consultative Council (TPCC) by Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Higher Education, Saifuddin Abdullah. Model that has been introduced by Saifuddin is one of its kinds which has never been practised before in Malaysia as an agenda for effective governance. The intention of this study is to analyse the effectiveness of the TPCC Model whether it can be the best model for public deliberation in Malaysia.

Key words: Deliberative democracy, TPCC, temerloh, Saifuddin Abdullah, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

This study looks on the effectiveness of Temerloh Parliamentary Consultative Council (TPCC) to be the model of deliberative democracy or public deliberation. The findings from this study will determine the reasons on why deliberative democracy is important for Malaysia and can be the best model for future multiracial/multicultural Malaysia. There are several objectives of this study. The first objective is to explain the relation between the model vis-a-vis the maturity of Malaysia democracy in general. Second, this study will analyse whether this model is good for the people and reliable and effective for policy formulation, decision-making and implementation in Temerloh especially from the perspective of the National Key Results Area (NKRA) and the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) setting up by the Federal Government. The third objective is to access the roles played by the civil society, business community and people generally and how they react and contribute to the implementation of this model in Temerloh. And finally, the fourth aim is to make recommendations based on the effectiveness of this model implemented in Temerloh and whether it can be practised by other parliamentary constituencies in Malaysia.

MODEL OF DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

According to Waghid (2002), this notion of democracy accentuates three inter-related aspects central to an understanding of democracy: Democracy as a system, democracy as a sphere for debate democracy as a set of meanings. The first two depictions can be linked to two broad conceptions of democracy. First, democracy as a representative system of political decision-making and second, democracy as a sphere for social and political life in which people enjoy equal opportunities and are engaged in self-development, self-fulfilment and self-determination (Carr and Hartnett, 1996). In this regard, a representative democracy maximises citizens' opportunities for self-determination, hence they must live in association with others (which) necessarily requires that they must sometimes obey collective decisions that are binding on all members of the association (Dahl, 2000). According to Levine (2003), democracy requires deliberation for three reasons:

- To enable citizens to discuss public issues and form opinions
- To give democratic leaders much better insight into public issues than elections are able to do
- To enable people to justify their views so we can sort out the better from the worse

Deliberative democracy simply refers to a conception of democratic government that secures a central place for reasoned discussion (rational deliberation) in political life. For Gutmann and Thompson (1990), a deliberative democratic theory offers a conception of democracy that secures a central place for moral discussion in political

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life. They argue that the promise of a deliberative democratic theory lies in a concern for finding terms of cooperation that each citizen can accept for the reason that contemporary societies are driven by deep conflict and moral disagreement (Gutmann and Thompson, 1990). Bohnam (1996), another defender of deliberative democracy, posits that democracy in some form implies public deliberation that is the deliberation of citizens is necessary if decisions are not to be merely imposed upon them consent is after all, the mean feature of democracy. In other words, political decision-making is legitimate insofar as policies are produced in a process of public discussion and debate in which citizens and their representatives, going beyond mere self-interest and limited points of view, reflect on the general interest or on their common good.

Among the numbers of definitions of deliberation and deliberative democracy, the Deliberative Democracy Consortium has one of the most practical versions: Deliberation is an approach to decision-making in which citizens consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, converse with one another to think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions and understandings. Deliberative democracy strengthens citizen voices in governance by including people of all races, classes, ages and geographies in deliberations that directly affect public decisions. As a result, citizens influence and can see the result of their influence on the policy and resource decisions that impact their daily lives and their future.

However, the model of deliberative democracy must be differentiated with the other model of democracy called aggregative democracy. Farrelly (2004) argues that the aggregative model of democracy is the popular show of hands understanding of democracy that we often invoke when trying to resolve disagreements. According to this model of democracy, decision-making processes ought simply to aggregate the preferences of citizens in choosing public officials and parties. The outcome of the process just mirrors the preferences of the majority of people. Young (2000) describes how the aggregative model conceives of democratic processes of policy formation:

> Individuals in the polity have varying preferences about what they want government institutions to do. They know that other individuals also have preferences which may or may not match their own. Democracy is a competitive process in which political parties and candidates offer their platforms and attempt

to satisfy the largest number of people's preferences. Citizens with similar preferences often organise interest groups in order to try to influence the actions of parties and policy-makers once they are elected. Individuals, interest groups public officials each may behave strategically, adjusting the orientation of their pressure tactics or coalition-building according to their perceptions of the activities of competing preferences

The aggregative model of democracy is problematic for many reasons. It fails to give sufficient attention to the emphasis on effective participation and enlightened understanding, two criteria which deliberative democrats believe are vital for achieving a more just polity. According to the aggregative model of democracy, citizens participate in the decision-making process primarily by making their preferences known through voting. Deliberative democrats reject this narrow conception of participation that conceives voting as the primary political act. Deliberative democrats argue that to fully participate in the decision-making process, one must participate in authentic deliberation and not simply express one's preferences. Such deliberation requires that parties abandon the strategic behaviour characteristic of the aggregative model of democracy and strive instead to reach a consensus among free and equal participates. To participate in this discursive practice is very different from participating in the decision-making process of the aggregative model of democracy. Deliberative democrats characterise participation in the democratic process as a transformative process. Through the process of public discussion with a plurality of differently opinions, people often gain new information, learn of different experiences of their collective problems or find that their own initial opinions are founded on prejudice or ignorance or that they have misunderstood the relation of their own interests to others (Young, 2000).

The more expansive conception of democratic participation that deliberative democrats endorse, thus ties in well with the criterion of gaining enlightened understanding. A process of aggregating existing preferences precludes enlightened understanding as there is no attempt to understand, let alone accommodate, the concerns of one's fellow citizens. However, deliberative democrats believe that their vision of democracy fosters enlightened understanding among citizens because it embodies the principle of reciprocity (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996). Elaborating on the principle, Gutmann and Thompson (1996) argue that reciprocity entails mutual respect. Mutual respect is a form of agreeing to disagree. It consists in an excellence of character that permits a

democracy to flourish in the face of fundamental moral disagreement. This is a distinctively deliberative kind of character. It is the character of individuals who are morally committed, self-reflective about their commitments, discerning of the difference between respectable and merely tolerable differences of opinion open to the possibility of changing their minds or modifying their positions at some time in the future if they confront unanswerable objections to their present point of view. By engaging in deliberation with those we disagree with we are expressing a willingness to listen to others, to take their concerns seriously and to find some common ground so that a just compromise can be achieved. Gutmann and Thompson (1996) consider a number of contentious policy issues, ranging from abortion and trade policy to welfare policy, to illustrate how the deliberative process fosters enlightened understanding and moral accommodation. However, mutual respect does not mean that we must always accept the claims of those, we disagree with but it does require that we listen to their concerns and that we justify the decisions by appealing to reasons we genuinely believe all reasonable persons could accept.

TPCC for local governance: Majlis Perundingan Parlimen Temerloh or Temerloh Parliamentary Consultation Council (TPCC) is a medium and a body of consultation for the representatives of Temerloh parliamentary constituency and selected Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) or groups of local citizens in Temerloh. The council is headed by a Member of Parliament (MP) for Temerloh (P88), Saifuddin Abdullah who won the general elections in 2008. The local governance is consisted of the MP, three state assemblymen with two are from the ruling party Barisan Nasional (BN) and one from the opposition Islamic Party (PAS), officers from various district institutions such as the district office, the health department, police department, education department welfare department. Meanwhile, the representatives from the people mostly come from two groups, the business communities and the NGOs. The local business communities are represented by several associations representing the business interests in the Temerloh town. NGOs are from organisations representing such as the youths, sports consumers. In order to involve every level of society in the consultation, a few numbers of local leaders such as the head of villages and the members of village committee were invited as well. These people act as the direct source of information and demand from the grassroots.

The council acts as a direct communication or debate in terms of policies, information and demands engaging all sorts of interests. Categorising the previous
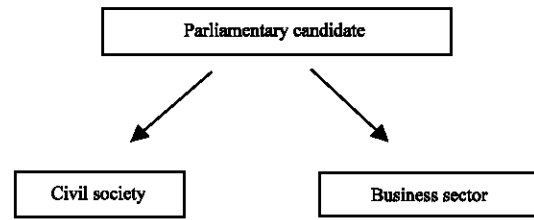

Fig. 1: Communication line in TPCC (Abdullah, 2008)

three elements of the council as state elite, sub-elite and the mass, the two-way communication line involves these three groups with the district office-bearers and the local representatives. The mass received information and reports in the form of directive orders and the updated reports on projects implemented by the constituency. The district officers received information, suggestions, feedbacks and complaints from the local people. Communication line between the MP and district officers with the people is also exclusive. Sometimes the business communities and NGOs acted as mediators between the local officers and the masses. Figure 1 shows the communication line among the people involved in the TPCC.

Since its establishment on 10 May, 2008, TPCC has held its meeting twice a year. The success of TPCC was determined by the seriousness of the MP for Temerloh constituency Saifuddin who also the Deputy Minister of Higher Education to show to Malaysians that participatory democracy or deliberative democracy can work in Temerloh if properly practised. Among the agendas of the meetings besides singing the national anthem Negaraku and prayer recital, the mission and agenda of TPCC were to make it as a body to formulate policy for the constituency and discuss the local problems and the way to resolve them. It also has been performing to check and balance the role of MP and local government officers in ensuring them to be transparent and accountable to the people. Besides, TPCC has become a medium for people to engage their leaders with regard to their grievances and concerns to the MP and state assemblymen.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF TEMERLOH

Temerloh (or Temerluh) is a town in Central Pahang, Malaysia in Temerloh District. Located about 130 km (81 miles) from Kuala Lumpur along the Kuantan-Kuala Lumpur trunk road, Temerloh is the second largest town in Pahang after Kuantan. It is situated at the junction of the Pahang and Semantan River. The district consists of two areas, the 1,442 km^2 (557 mile^2) Municipal Council

Area (64.08%) and the 808 km^2 (312 mile^2) outer Municipal Council Area (35.92%). Today, Temerloh usually refers to the territory under the administration of Temerloh Municipal Council or Majlis Perbandaran Temerloh which includes the smaller towns adjacent to the city such as Mentakab, Lanchang, Kuala Krau and Kerdau. Temerloh District is bordered by Maran District on the East, Bentong on the West, Jerantut and Bera on the North and South, respectively. An old town with some colonial buildings and shop houses, the town has prospered in recent years as a transportation hub and new industrial centre. There have been many new commercial and industrial hub built in Temerloh in recent years. Cutting travel time in half, the newly completed East Coast Expressway links the town to Kuala Lumpur and Kuantan and adds to the growth of Temerloh.

Temerloh has been rebranded as Bandar Ikan Patin which literally means Patin fish town. Patin (*Pangasius* sp.), a type of freshwater catfish is a local delicacy highly sought after in the country. Patin fish is famous for its juicy taste and can be considered one of the best freshwater fish in Malaysia. The Temerloh District was established on 1st July, 1889 when J.P. Rodger, the first Pahang Resident divided Pahang State into six smaller administration areas (districts): Pekan, Rompin, Kuala Pahang, Kuantan, Temerloh and Hulu Pahang. The capital of Temerloh District then (1st July, 1889) was Kuala Semantan. As Kuala Semantan begin to develop rapidly, the name Kuala Semantan was thought unsuitable as the kuala only refers to the river confluence. Hence, Kuala Semantan changed its name to Temerloh. Before the British colonisation, Temerloh was governed by several headvillagers (village level) and Orang Besar (dignitaries) under the Pahang's administration of the 'Orang Besar System'. The Temerloh's people (then) were mainly Malay and Orang Asli (the indigenous), however there were also small groups of Chinese and Arabs there.

The Temerloh District is consisted of two Parliamentary constituencies namely Kuala Krau and Temerloh. However, TPCC is part of only Temerloh constituency even though the district officers will answer for both constituencies (Table 1 and 2). Under the Temerloh constituency and TPCC, there are three state assembly seats; Mentakab, Lanchang and Kuala Semantan. Temerloh has 10 mukim (provinces):

- Jenderak (83,449 ha (834.49 km^2; 322.20 mile^2))
- Semantan (74,341 ha (743.41 km^2; 287.03 mile^2))
- Perak (20,987 ha (209.87 km^2; 81.03 mile^2))
- Kerdau (13,214 ha (132.14 km^2; 51.02 mile^2))
- Mentakab (10,364 ha (103.64 km^2; 40.02 mile^2))

Table 1: List of Temerloh District representatives in the Federal Parliament (Dewan Rakyat)

Parliament	Seat name	Members of parliament	Party
P87	Kuala Krau	Ismail Mohd Said	BN
P88	Temerloh	Saifuddin Abdullah	BN

P87 is not part of TPCC

Table 2: List of Temerloh District representatives in the State Legislative Assembly (Dewan Undangan Negeri)

Parliament	State	Seat name	State assemblymen	Party
P87	N27	Jenderak	Mohamed Jaafar	BN
P87	N28	Kerdau	Syed Ibrahim Syed Ahmad	BN
P88	N30	Mentakab	Chuah Boon Seong	BN
P88	N31	Lanchang	Mohd Sharkar Shamsudin	BN
P88	N32	Kuala Semantan	Syed Hamid Syed Mohamed	PAS

N27 and N28 are not part of TPCC

- Sanggang (8,809 ha (88.09 km^2; 34.01 mile^2))
- Lebak (4,404 ha (44.04 km^2; 17.00 mile^2))
- LipatKajang (3,886 ha (38.86 km^2; 15.00 mile^2))
- Bangau (3,368 ha (33.68 km^2; 13.00 mile^2))
- Songsang (2,331 ha (23.31 km^2; 9.00 mile^2))

TPCC AND DEMOCRACY: TPCC AS A TRANSFORMATION POLICY

This council was initiated by Saifuddin himself after holding office in 2008. It is a bold attempt to uphold and store a fresh version of democracy known as participatory democracy that entails the values of democracy such as empowerment, representative and development partner. It is acted as the platform for discussion and pact among three major components, the state, business sector and the civil society. With the involvement of the people from every level, TPCC acknowledges their rights to participate in the decision-making process within the Temerloh parliamentary constituency.

Abdullah (2008) establishes TPCC as a mini Parliament which was based on his understanding of democracy as stated in his book 'new politics: Towards a Mature Malaysian Democracy'. This book was articulated from the massive loss of the National Front in the 2008 General Elections. Eventually, Abdullah manages to pick up the people's demand to reform the democratic system in Malaysia. Hence, this book was published in the intention to instill political integrity and new governance in local level. It stresses in four components; political idealism, knowledge politics, wisdom politics service politics. In enhancing political integrity, Abdullah believes that a politician must put into practice the four components which all of them are derived from the idealism of common good. Idealism in politics is necessary for longevity in power, as well as to accommodate the people's interests.

Abdullah (2008) argues that a mature democracy can be implemented with the politicians be idealistic in two characteristics; incline towards noble and positive values and the hate towards fallacy, tyranny and disorder. Furthermore, politics must be inserted with knowledge. Knowledgeable candidates shall outline their actions with a more careful and responsible manner as they are the one who will be leading the political future: A politician who practices knowledge politics will be articulate in delivering his opinion and perspective (Abdullah, 2008). And to accommodate the knowledge, one politician must also be responsible to other politicians, especially their adversaries. Wisdom politics highlights the absence of defamation. Mobilisation of support cannot foster a mature democracy with the existence of defamation. Despite the act is irresponsible and sinful, this act have seen to be the factor for competing political parties to be enemies instead of just competitors in politics (Abdullah, 2008). And the last component, service politics ensures the politicians who won seats during elections to serve the people humbly and continuously.

According to Abdullah (2008), the people are important in the process of decision making. It is this level of people that were left behind in the previous application of democracy in all levels; national, state and local government. This council, the TPCC is therefore to heighten up the role of the people, as well as include them in policy makings and development activities rather than the state being the exclusive body to decide and act. Moreover, improvement of democracy is important as it should bring prosperity and happiness to the lives of the people instead of sufferings and injustice. It is targeted to achieve a certain level of pleasure that could benefit people at every level. The ultimate goal of TPCC is to create awareness of the people that the government is keen to improve the level of democracy in practice. And as a result this participatory democracy shall create a platform for a more matured democratic practice.

Besides participatory democracy, this model of parliamentary consultation is targeted to conceal the ideology of new governance a term introduced by Rhodes. According to Rhodes (1996), governance is 'self-organising, inter-organisational networks' which complement market and hierarchies as governing structures for authoritatively allocating resources and exercising control and coordination. In consequence, the business sector and people play crucial role to the success of this council. As Abdullah (2008) stated in a letter called Surat Temerloh (the Temerloh letter, http://www.saifuddinabdullah.com.my/forum.html) dated 14 June 2008, three important sectors that act as the driver of the nation are the state or politics, business sector and the civil society. The involvement of three sectors indicates the effort for change. Change of democratic practice will determine the change of the nature in decision-making. New governance is a concept that entails a fresh form of the local management structure. It acknowledges the fact that the government is not the only body to determine to role in decision-making but the business community and civil society are also included and essential in the process. Based on this framework, civil society consists of children, teenagers, youth, students, graduates, the elderly, women, workers, artists, writers, professionals, academics, media and counting. These sets of people are the most important element to indicate the success of the new governance.

It is widely agreed, youth play the biggest role in shifting the political settings in the last general election in 2008. As a result, Abdullah (2008) believes that the TPCC would empower these groups of people at every angle to meet their young energetic minds. Hence, the New Governance agenda introduces civil society/youth strategy/action. It is a group consist of the youth as the core members which agreed on six objectives as below:

- Assistance in providing conducive and positive surroundings
- Assistance in providing preventive surroundings from negative influence as well as fix or remove it if occurred
- Assistance during disaster and emergency
- Fighting for equality in life and socio-economy
- Fighting for human rights
- Preparing leader apprentice especially from this particular youth movement

At this point, this movement have achieved many contributions from their volunteer works such as:

- Providing assistance during emergency and disaster
- Improve education and skill quality through study groups, training classes, private schools, playgrounds and skill trainings
- Runs activities to create awareness for youth development, environment, drugs, cigarette, HIV/AIDS and etc.
- Implement religious education programmes
- Handling multifaceted activities for every level of society to benefit their leisure time
- Educate the society as well as help solving issues such as poverty, corruption and social inequality
- Tries to influence decision-making process that will benefit civil society such as rights for speech, salary, work leave and others

- Holding leadership training
- Provide assistance on government's core programmes and activities
- Holding variety of sports activities and programmes
- Form humanitarian aids for foreign countries, such as Palestine, Southern Thailand, Southern Philippines, Myanmar, Vietnam, Bosnia, Kosova, Timor Leste and Iraq

At the early stage, MPPT was mostly funded by the government through a scheme called 'Skim Bantuan Segera Persekutuan Bagi Kawasan Parlimen' (BSKP or Federal Immediate Fund to Local Parliament Scheme). But after the fifth MPPT meeting, Saifuddin insisted for the MPPT to use the entire money provided and entitled for the Parliamentarian totaled Ringgit Malaysia (RM) 60,000.00. It was an effort to level up his political integrity under his agenda of new politics, as well as to combat any possibility of corruption. In overall, TPCC was formed to assist the transformation plan implemented by the government in supporting the social and economic development and to create a conducive environment for democracy to flourish. Besides, TPCC played a significant role to accommodate to every level of society. The aim is to achieve through the Temerloh's Key Result Area (TKRA) vis-a-vis the New Governance Model.

TKRA and NKRA The determination to change is highly related to the main policy of the Prime Minister, Najib Tun Razak whom has launched transformation policies to bring change in the lives of the people, as well as implementing political reforms and strengthening delivery system. The transformation programmes at the national level have inspired Saifuddin to implement a similar programme at the local level. Hence, TKRA was launched on the 6 March in 2010 in parallel to the NKRA (National Key Result Area) programme at the national level. There are six objectives in TKRA:

- To lessen numbers of crimes
- To eradicate corruption
- To increase level of education
- To upgrade the livings of the low paid society
- To upgrade basic infrastructures in the suburbs
- To provide conducive public transportations in the city

Thus, these six objectives remain as the core indicators for the TPCC to strategise actions, as well as measure the achievements in the parliamentary level. TPCC is run under these six indicators which translate to education and training, health and welfare, occupation

and economy, participation and civil society and finally, infrastructure and public facility. Through the education and training agenda, the TPCC is targeted to improve level of education through quality schools and its surroundings, better Information Technology (IT) facilities and trainings to produce talented citizens. This first element consists of four major goals. Firstly to construct a knowledge community that endures knowledge and the culture of appreciating knowledge. Secondly, reach the top list in the whole Pahang as No. 1 in academic achievement. Third is to provide a conducive and positive condition for having a higher education institution in Temerloh. And final is to add numbers of skill trainings and facilities for the locals, especially for the youth and women.

In order to fulfil these objectives, the TPCC has taken numerous actions embracing many subjects such as schools, students, parents and teachers' associations (PIBGs), teachers public and school libraries. They provide financial support to several school programmes such as motivational programme for primary, secondary high school students who will undertake important examinations, such as the Primary School Examination (UPSR), Secondary School Examination (PMR), Malaysia Education Certificate (SPM) and Malaysia Higher Education Certificate (STPM). Besides focusing on the students, TPCC does not neglect the role of PIBGs or the parents in assisting the school and teachers to produce quality students. In this regards, TPCC held a seminar for the PIBG in Temerloh to equip them with knowledge and skill for a better cohesiveness between parents and teachers. There is also activity of book donations to the schools.

On top of that the TPCC, through the debates, managed to come out with the policy to improve the public facilities, such as the internet centre like the Lebak IT centre that was able to produce groups of IT literates. Likewise, Temerloh's Public Library added its collections, started academic collection and Temerloh collection under the sponsorship of the TPCC. Moreover, sponsored wifi facility and library related programmes; such as Mohkeperpustakaan or let's go to the library as a means to attract local people to the library.

Health and welfare is the second priority in the implementation of TKRA. Several key goals have been outlined; such as producing a healthy society, as well as educating them to the spirits of sports and outdoor activities. Secondly, to provide additional facilities to smoothen up the activities and programmes held by the General Hospital of Temerloh and all the mini clinics throughout Temerloh. Thirdly, implement regular healthy programmes to create awareness among the people of to

live healthy and active. Fourthly, aware of the talent Temerloh have in the netball team, the TPCC targets to produce a training centre for netball. And lastly, provide assistance for welfare activities.

This second agenda has been implemented through variety of activities that encapsulate every level of societies. TPCC aims to provide an additional transportation for the General Hospital in the form of a van for the benefits of the patients that needs to commute to the hospital regularly, such as those that have kidney problems which need to attend treatment every other day.

To ensure an active and productive society, Netball Training Centre was instilled to provide facilities, training as well as matches. This is to ensure Temerloh owns the privilege as the provider for netball talents in Temerloh as well as in Pahang. Besides netball, other sports are also given attention such as ping pong, chess many other sports activities. The support consists of financial support, holding games and matches as well seminars.

On top of sports and health issue, welfare of the people is as likely important. Under the zakat programme (charity for Muslims), TPCC ensures the donations given from the wealth annually distributed evenly and fairly to the people in need. Moreover, TPCC took the initiative to identify all poor citizens in the district to monitor their welfare and needs regularly.

The third agenda is occupation and economy. It is highly related to the development of the district as well as the individuals within it. Three goals are identified. Firstly, increase number of occupation which simultaneously lessening unemployment. Secondly, bring rapid economic activities. And lastly, to export Temerloh's most famous and exclusive fish 'patin' to international market.

Several actions have taken place to promote its patin such as forming cooperation for the patin entrepreneurs and provide capitals as a kick start. As an initial step before entering international market, Temerloh's patin is being promoted at the local and national level through the 'Temerloh Patin' logo.

On the other hand, small entrepreneurs are also given assistance through many programmes, such as forming carnivals for them to sell their products. In addition, to improve their quality of products systematic and organised method of collecting, packaging and marketing their products are also introduced and implemented.

Identity and socio-culture provides a different angle of the agenda to achieve the TKRA. Through this schema, it is likely to achieve a spiritually healthy society which mostly complies with the teachings of Islam as the core religion in the district. Secondly, it is aimed to market local artistic products at national and international level. And finally, to strengthen the bond among societies at all levels through the concept of tolerate and integration.

Among the actions taken to fulfil all three goals are contribute al Qurans to mosques, sponsor uniforms for the Temerloh Public Mosque officials, form several Islamic programmes such as during the Ramadhan (fasting season). In terms of socio-culture activities, financial support was given to several traditional teams such as the Dikir Rebana which promotes the unique identity of Temerloh song, dance and musical instruments.

A more general agenda, participation and civil society are targeted to create awareness among the people of the new politics introduced by the Parliament candidate. This version of politics entails two crucial components politics of integrity and New Governance (details in the next section). In order to involve the people in politics and decision-making process, Abdullah have taken the initiative to form a face-to-face meeting with the locals through the 'meeting the locals clinic' every Friday morning and 'Sembang Petang' or 'Afternoon Chat' programme and also dialogues. These meetings are held informally to seek information from the actual people on their problems, demands and needs. Besides meeting physically, Abdullah also meet and interact with Temerloh citizen through social networking engines, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Interaction through the internet was an indicator of his innovation of democracy which was introduced in his new politics. MPPT decided it was crucial to fully utilise the internet facility to reach the people. The idea to add the element of 'e-democracy' in the MPPT, the council formed a Facebook account called Majlis Perundingan Parlimen Temerloh (MPPT) (http://www.facebook.com/pages/Majlis-Perundingan-Parlimen-Temerloh-MPPT/206210542735825). It was aimed to act as a platform for the MPPT members to discuss in continuously matters and the numbers of discussants can be wider and unlimited. This effort was a benevolent action to take in order to collect the voices in terms of demands and feedbacks from the grassroots. At the early stage, members of the MPPT who were still beginners in the IT (Information Technology) were given several officers as assistant.

Lastly, there is an agenda to improve infrastructure and public facilities. It is aimed to provide the best service to the people in all aspects including prompt and efficient maintenance. This agenda involves several government

bodies such as the district office, agricultural department, irrigation and drainage department, youth and sports department and many others. Besides providing assistance and distributing financial support gain from the local government to the locals, these bodies are to ensure the subjects under their supervision is monitored regularly and problems solved within short period. In addition through this agenda, the TPCC aims to help rebuild houses that were damaged during disasters as well as providing aid through BAKTI.

New governance: In addition to the TKRA model, the TPCC also follows the guideline of a well-structured government called the New Governance. It is an inclusive type of government which includes all sectors and level of society in the development team as well as decision making process. A model to improve the quality of life and to bring happiness to the people involves. Despite many definitions on such concept, the TPCC came up with their version New Governance is 'a transformation in previously unbalanced relationship between three major sectors (government/politics, business and civil society) to a new type of relationship that synergises all three sectors.' However, the government must take into consideration several issues.

Firstly, the unbalance relationship among the three sectors where there is strong bond between the government and politics with the business sector but on the other hand weak relationship between both and civil society. It is estimated due to the feudal tradition that has been in practice that causes a weak bond between the government and civil society. It is sought as a patron-client relationship rather than as co-player. And this argument applies to the relationship between business sector and civil society as well.

The second issue is the identification of which party that ultimately demands for an authentic relationship as development co-player. Because, it seems as only the civil society and the business sector recognise this issue all this while. Third, the tradition of blaming each other has to end. Blaming other sectors when facing with problems or setbacks will not solve problems but instil hate among each other. All the entities should realise that cooperation and teamwork is important to handle problem yet it occurs.

The issue of fear among the politicians has caused them to be defensive and too selective in entertaining issues against them. Politicians tend to fear due to their level of education is lower than the professionals from the other two sectors. Therefore, this fear is also to change in order to create a healthy and prosperous relationship with the subjects. Related to the concept of fear above, the fifth issue is the reluctance of these politicians to accept the model which gives business and civil society the same

level as them in developing the district. This reluctance might lead to the people feeling marginalised which then result to oppositions and dissents.

Moreover, there are issues regarding the misunderstandings and malpractices by the government. First, all policies and programmes that have been billed should be implemented with responsibility and accountability. Secondly, the issue of legitimacy of the politician's candidature is also important. Thirdly, government's role as the provider must change to as a facilitator. And finally and also most importantly, all repressive laws that restrict the youth and civil society to participate should be eradicated immediately.

Implementation the new governance: The new governance can only be preceded with all the issues above are handled thoroughly via two mechanisms; empowerment the business sector and civil society. The first strategy allows business and civil society to stand at the same level with the government thus entering a new relationship phase which has never achieved before. Unlike in previous settings where the people act as passive player, the empowerment of the citizens increases their ability and awareness to participate and get involved in policy making processes.

A transformation of role is installed such as from opportunity to rights and from formal negotiation to informal and inclusive involvement of the people in decision making processes. Among the concepts that are targeted to embrace this transformation are capacity building, human rights, responsibility, autonomy and participative development. Empowering the people ensures decisions to be people-oriented. Therefore, several red tapes procedures have been eliminated and the people obtain direct information on policy decisions which lower the risk for misunderstandings and dissents. Moreover, accountability and responsibility issue is accomplished through direct information as the people are alert to the activities being discussed and its details. Therefore, the institutions or politicians involved are responsible to implement such decisions without delay. This system however does not give ultimate power to the civil society and business sector. It is a process of channelling idealism, vision, knowledge, experience, activism, motivation and energy to the people. Hence, to bring new governance into realisation, all entities must equip themselves to this transformation of minds and culture.

CONCLUSION

A fresh version of democracy is finally installed, although at local level. This 'participatory democracy' is likely to consolidate if all levels participate and eradicate

older tradition of fear, hate and unbalance. This type of democracy is hopefully to give a better life for the people in Temerloh.

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