



**Malaysia Prihatin: Our responsibility as Malaysian citizens**  
**By: JASLIN KAUR GILL**

Dear Malaysian citizens,

The world doesn't know us, we are only known for tragedies of planes, men holding coconuts, scandals, record-breaking ages for prime ministers and, buy 1 free 2. Sad but true. Our worst moments really do define us. We joke and pass a silent moment for victims lost in the crossfire but what happens when we stop being silent. Picture this, higher education is a right for all. Schools are safe and our syllabus are top notch. Jobs with equal opportunity and not contracts that cannot guarantee anything. All are respected. Skill over skin. Our harmony not constantly being used as a bargaining chip in the play for power. A country with a bright future. Wouldn't that be lovely?

We can and must do better. Malaysians have lost a lot of hope in the past but now is the time to work together more than ever. We are not as divided as they want us to believe. We will be kind, we will be understanding, we are a country of many and a place of love. Malaysia is our country, I'm tired of people saying that some do not belong in our country. This is our country and if you do not realise that then we will all fail together. Can we really say we are united when we so easily say 'it's not my problem'. It is time for us to care about the things that has nothing to do with us because only then will we ever get better. We can only receive what we all demand. There should have never been an 'us and them', it should have only ever been 'we'. We must accept that we failed. 'Us and them' has wounded this country far too much for too long. It is time for us to not be blind but to acknowledge the differences, the mistreatment of others. The gap must be bridged, the wound must be healed. We cannot allow it to be used to buy us. Our responsibility as Malaysian citizens? To care for each other even when 'it's not my problem'. This includes getting the vaccine for the sake of others even if you're scared. Kindness in Malaysians has always existed. When those we believed would come to our aid failed in times of crisis, it was other Malaysians who supported us.

They do not lead, they serve. They climb the stage and parade their promises marinated in lies of hope for a new Malaysia, a better Malaysia. Often they forget that this is not the road they have paved but the stage Malaysian hands have built. The power was never theirs for the taking but for us to give and yet they took it anyway. It takes a collective understanding that they cannot be trusted to lead, they are assigned to serve and if they do not meet the cut, this is not a child's game. No, we do not hand out participation trophies nor should we allow 'it's okay here's a second chance' or even 'Let's give them a chance'. We must be ruthless in our choice, our voice must be heard, and our problems must be solved. There is and will never be space for error, these are our lives they play with. We have lost too much to allow those incompetent to care to lead our nation. Our responsibility as Malaysians you ask? Vote, simple. In the chance that there is no one who deserves your vote... Then stand up, rise to the occasion. Be a voice worthy of your vote. They are Malaysian citizens just like us after all so there really isn't much standing in your way, the pay isn't half bad either.

Our best choices betray us, so what is left. Why even try to speak when no one is listening. I understand the frustration, the unchanging eternity we live in. The way our home seems bleak and that our mere existence won't make a difference in the grand scheme of things. It really is overwhelming at times to think about how powerless we are. Despite it all, I will never lose hope in Malaysia. Maybe it's naive to think we could be better. If we give up we lose no matter what but if we don't stop trying we still have hope. As dull as that glimmer may be, it's good to know it exists. Our responsibility, is to never lose hope. In times like this it feels like no one can be trusted and that nothing will ever truly change. I urge Malaysian's to not lose hope. It is the few valuable pieces we have left.

I know we do not believe there can be change but when we come together there is nothing Malaysian's cannot achieve because Malaysia Prihatin. To those who opened food banks for all and helped white flag. Will you stand for us, we believe in Malaysia because of you. To those that have shown kindness amidst the covid chaos, will you stand for us, we believe in Malaysia because of you. For the man who put the SOP lines at Bukit Jalil when the government did not. Will you stand for us, we believe in Malaysia because of you. For all the frontliners who risked their lives for us. Thank you for standing for us, we believe in Malaysia because of

you. For all the educators, who struggled and learnt their way through online teaching. Thank you for standing for us, we believe in Malaysia because of you.

If you have lost someone, I am sorry. This is for you. If you have worried for your family and friends, I am sorry. This is for you. If you have fought battles within others did not see, if you have lost your job, or if you have worried for your future, I am sorry. This is for you. If this has made you feel powerless and this is not the Malaysia you want, I am sorry. This is for you. If you want a better Malaysia, I am not sorry, because so do I. This is for us. We are worthy and we deserve better, It's time we demanded it and do better. I don't want to be tired of looking at the news everyday. I dream of a Malaysia that every Malaysian citizen is proud of. That is our responsibility, making the Malaysia we all are proud of.

Our responsibilities are a long list indeed, a challenge we must take on so Malaysia can heal from all that has happened. Our work is far from over, it has only begun. It is time to be compassionate, kind and loud. We must demand a better future for all of us. If not now then when?

-A Malaysian with hope.