

## *G-Economy, Back to the Future*

### MIERVIEWS

**By Bashirah Mohd Bashir**

Sustainable development, renewable energy or green living; whatever name we call it, is all about leaving at least what we have for our children. I may call it 'Green Economy'. From banana leaf wrapped *nasi lemak* to emission of Greenhouse gases, it is all about Green Economy.

Recent Copenhagen negotiations among 190 countries on a new deal to fight climate change beyond 2012 ended with "unbinding agreement" paving the way for "future climate". It is very disheartening to see countries with power doing what they do at times. Industrialised nations should help the undeveloped countries by at least quantifying gains they make from environmentally harmful business and channel the funds to promote and develop green innovation to ensure future environmental sustainability.

What is important to control the climate change is the initiative of the world to focus on needs and not luxury. Funds pledged could be spent on so many things, ranging from creating awareness, giving incentives to renewable energy, agricultural development, sustainable living, criminalising war, reversing the way we live to how we lived... the list can go on.

Our Prime Minister realises that green technology will be the new driver for economic growth and promotes development of green technologies and a culture of resource use optimisation. The vision 2020, targeted GDP can be achieved by being an agro based nation or environment friendly industrialised nation rather than being a mere pollutant based industrialised nation. It just takes political will and the people's support. From plastic bags to power plants everything can be made green when we want to make it. Sectors like agricultural R&D, sustainable energy and green education should be concentrated.

We should change the way we think and the way we approach issues of concern. For instance, urging people to stop smoking but having them in the market is totally on the contrary. If the authorities really care about the adverse effects of smoking, they should devise ways to stop the smoking habits of its people instead of boasting concern it has for the health and habits of its citizens by imposing higher taxes and gaining from compromised health of the people. We should treat the disease and not the symptom. Spend it on rehab, counselling instead of taxing people's health. After all, smoking also emits CO<sub>2</sub>.

We should not put a cold patch on the globe for a temporary solution; we should make it healthy from the inside, just like what we do with ourselves. Measures must be taken more intensively to make the world green and stop racing for destructive technological advancement. We must address the problem of the poor with agro based global drive - the basic survival needs met, minus the ego. Producers and manufacturers in their respective fields should come up with an environment friendly solution or alternative for their products; like the use of well-packaged *serai wangi* as pest repellent instead of traditional pesticides.

We should look at the current climate demands as an indicator for an economic transformation not as a crisis. Let's take renewable energy for instance; Malaysia can be a world leader in renewable energy applications as we have committed to do something to address climate change. Malaysia has abundant resources important for sustainable energy. In Malaysia, bureaucratic hindrances have become lesser to accommodate the development of small renewable energy program (SREP). Although so much power potential from environmental friendly resources are available, there are still many major key barriers and challenges that need to be addressed and overcome such as; consistent feedstock, electricity tariff, renewable energy power purchasing agreement, support from financial institutions and grants for development costs.

Promoting Green Economy is important given the very significant environmental, economic, and social benefits. It should not be perceived only as a way to create cleaner environment; it must also be seen as a stable and healthy economy. To develop our nation to become a more sustainable economy we have to do more with less by being more resource efficient, planning smart investments, encourage stability and competition, build up skills and reward efforts.