

## **KLBC Fireside Chat with YB Encik Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Youth and Sports**

The Kuala Lumpur Business Club (KLBC) held a Fireside Chat on “**Malaysian Youths: Their Hopes and Fears**” with YB Encik Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Youth and Sports on 20 September 2013 at Hilton Kuala Lumpur.

KLBC President Tengku Dato’ Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz gave the welcome remarks and introduced the Minister. The Minister then took the podium and proceeded with his talk on the topic.

The Minister addressed several topics relevant to the younger generation which included education, national unity, social media and sports.

It was noted that although 60 per cent of Malaysian graduates were women, the percentage steadily decreased as they entered the workforce and advanced in their careers. To address this issue, the government has urged employers to set up nurseries at the workplaces to enable working mothers to maintain their jobs. “This will ensure that the country does not lose talent, experience and potential,” added the Minister.

To deal with the gender imbalance of university students, the Minister said that this was a worldwide trend where most male students tended to gravitate towards vocational training institutes instead of universities. With this increasing trend, the Minister noted that there should be focus on improving existing vocational training institutes to support the country’s movement towards high intensity human capital and becoming a fully developed nation by 2020.

The Minister had further emphasised the importance and value of the youth of Malaysia in steering the direction of the nation.

The importance of the government in gaining the trust of the youth was something that the Minister also stressed on. The government was cognisant of the economic challenges facing youth today and has put into place efforts and resources to address those challenges.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports, together with the Ministry of Education has introduced the “1 Student, 1 Sports” programme into all schools in Malaysia. The Ministry’s aspiration is to develop a culture of “Sports for All” so that Malaysian citizens have access to all sports facilities in the country. Other initiatives include enhancing the development of prestigious sports and development of the sports industry as an economic catalyst for the nation.

The Ministry has also proposed the removal of the Universities and University Colleges Act that limits student involvement in politics. Board member, Encik Fad’l Mohamed then moderated the Question and Answer session in which KLBC members and guests took the opportunity to raise various issues pertaining to youth and sports.

The Fireside Chat was attended by over 60 participants, comprising both KLBC members and invited guests.