Environmental Governance

Corporate Liability

Institutional & Political Reform (NACP)

Annual Report

THE CENTER TO COMBAT CORRUPTION AND CRONYSM

Anti-Corruption & Good Governance

Major Advocacy Areas

- Institutional & Political Reform (NACP)
- Corporate Liability
- Whistleblower Protection
- Environmental Governance

GLC Appointments and vote buying

Conflict of Interest & Political Interference

Corruption Convictions in Court

Investigative Research

More Scandals Exposed

Transparency in Public Procurement

Support Letters Direct Nego Business as Usual

EXCLUSIVE!

Democracy at Stake

Where are the 1MDB Returned Funds?

2020

Annual Report

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The last 12 months has been trying and tough times for Malaysia.

For C4 Center, 2020 can described as tumultuous, to say the least.

Our frontline, whistleblower and anti-corruption work, had been attacked, as the team faced police harassment, a letter of demand from a sitting Minister and a closing space to advance institutional reforms.

Malaysian voters stinging rebuke to the Barisan Nasional back in 2018, saw a cruel reversal of fortunes through an internal coup and dramatic power grab.

The fledgling Pakatan Harapan government crumbled, leaving a circus of greedy politicians, hopping parties and forming new coalitions to seize power. Malaysia’s democracy descended into one of its darkest chapters in history.

While many were stunned by the “Sheraton move” we were in fact warned by one of the defectors of a ‘deep state’ syndrome enveloping the system. While we knew corrupt leaders were trying to take the sky down and avoid going to jail, no one really dared to imagine that they would return all too soon.

The COVID 19 pandemic that swept through the nation as it did the world saw once stable and admired Malaysia plunge into twin disasters of a severe political and economic downturn, uncertain of where the future would lead us to.

Corruption was again thrust into the centre of Malaysia’s political landscape and governance. Many lawmakers were apparently on sale, and much horse trading was alleged behind the scenes. The Sabah state elections was triggered as a result of political defectors. New malpractices and scandals around COVID 19 kits and vaccines were surfacing, as with other scandals of a complex and transnational nature.

High profile corrupt officials including former PM Najib’s step-son, and former Sabah Chief Minister were freed from corruption charges, and institutional reforms just hung. The National Anti Corruption Plan (NACP) had stalled, despite the Prime Minister paying lip service to it.

Despite the gloom and doom that had set base, C4 Center continued steadfast with its work to follow the money, enhance our investigation work, and build capacities around whistleblower protection, environmental governance and research around political donations and procurement.

We deeply appreciate the many people of Malaysia, our donors and supporters once again for lending strength to our work, despite such trying times.

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH WILL GET US GOING!
C4 Center in 2020
Achievements & Challenges

30 press statements
65 times cited in the news
2 online webinars
1 online round table discussion
2 international panel forum
2 TV appearances
1 Letter of Demand
1 police questioning against our press statement
MACC and C4 are optimistic to fight corruption together

C4 Center met MACC Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki and his team to discuss potential areas for meaningful collaboration in investigating corruption and in creating public awareness. Datuk Seri Azam Baki was very open to state-society engagements. He also agreed with the importance of empowering and enhancing the independence of MACC to combat corruption.

#UnitedAgainstCorruption
Democracy at Stake

Few leading members from civil society were called in for questioning after placing themselves in the frontline to protest and to voice out the robbing of our democratic vote and forming a backdoor government. Only a few days after the unelected government took office, we saw the return of harassment towards activists and Malaysians. Three of C4 team members were called in for questioning on different occasions and possible charge under the S4(1) Sedition Act and S233(1) of the Communications and Multimedia Act. We will not surrender and will continue to stand up and voice out against the madness and injustices that are taking place in our country now.

The police action was definitely ‘harassment and intimidation’ on civil society. Trying to keep us from expressing critical views, while politicians focus on grabbing power. Ironically PM Muhyiddin also admitted his government was not the one the people voted for!

The YDPA however reminded politicians that fighting corruption must be a top priority at the first parliamentary sitting of the Perikatan Nasional government. Despite this call, anti-graft activists have been singled out, harassed, and targeted.

“I urge my government to remain committed to the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Plan. I urge everyone to champion the aspiration where the country’s development won’t be eroded by corruption, misappropriation and abuse of power. Inculcate the idea that corruption is disgusting and must be combated at all cost in the minds of our people from when they are in school”

- Yang di-Pertuan Agong (YDPA) Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, May 18 2020 Parliament Sitting
Malaysia’s efforts to curb corruption following the monumental change of government in 2018, crumbled like a ton of bricks, when the power grab and internal siege for power took place in February 2020.

The new unelected government moved to quickly fortify itself by building loyalty through strengthened patronage and political appointments into GLCs and statutory bodies, crushing much work on building accountability and transparency in these opaque bodies.

Billions of tax-payers money were used to roll out stimulus packages in aid of victims and marginalised groups of the COVID 19 pandemic, without parliamentary approval or any kind of checks and balance.

An emergency proclamation was sought to suspend Parliament, in the name of COVID 19, sending the country’s democracy reeling, and into its lowest ebb.

Corporate corruption is a rising threat to governments everywhere. As corporations big and small are the central pillars of economic growth, in some situations even to the extent of state capture. The enormous influence of business over human rights norms and good governance, have allowed bribery, patronage and outright corruption to fester.
Whistleblower Protection - our key campaign

Whistleblowing is a dangerous occupation in Malaysia.

As a whistleblower organisation, known for naming and shaming corrupt and powerful people, we can attest to this, as what often accompanies high profile exposes, are harassment and intimidation. The most recent was the expose on Health Minister using his undue influence to appoint a former director linked to his chain of companies, to be awarded the procurement of COVID 19 testing kits. While this is a subject of an MACC investigation, we remain very concerned that even a property developer has been allegedly awarded contracts to procure COVID testing kits.

We received a letter of demand for liabilities up to RM 30 million and a public apology for denting his credibility. We replied his letter politely and refused to adhere to its demands.

It is widely acknowledged that whistleblowers are a critical part of uncovering corruption scandals. Despite the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 (the Act), had come into force, MACC has lamented a very low number of persons actually come to them to report corruption.

In fact, the annual report from the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) in 2012 indicates that out of the total of 8,953 complaints received by the Commission, only 28 were from whistleblowers.

The climate of fear and that of real reprisals, from blowing the whistle on corruption, has deterred Malaysians from coming out to report corruption.
The company in question is heavily rumoured to be Khazanah Jaya Sdn Bhd.

The inexperienced property developer, has no track record!

The company in question is heavily rumoured to be Khazanah Jaya Sdn Bhd.

Ministry of Health

Adham Baba (Health Minister)

RM30 mil Procurement Contract

Allegedly awarded via direct tender

Klinik Adham

Iskandar Miza

Kuala Lumpur and Tan Jiat Jui are current shareholders and directors

Private clinic chain

Director oversight

Ministry of Health

The company in question is heavily rumoured to be Khazanah Jaya Sdn Bhd.

I would like to request more explanation on the Covid-19 test kit worth RM30mil that had links with Adham Baba’s clinic, owned by the health minister. Maybe that’s why he ran out of the Dewan Rakyat instead of answering this question.

Due to lack of transparency, the RM30 million Procurement Contract remain shrouded in secrecy.

Minister demands RM30 million, apology from C4 on MoH contract claims

"I would like to request more explanation on the Covid-19 test kit worth RM30mil that had links with Adham Baba’s clinic, owned by the health minister. Maybe that’s why he ran out of the Dewan Rakyat instead of answering this question."

In Parliament on 28/7/2020: Former law minister Liew Vui Keong asked about the MACC’s investigation into Health Minister alleged link to Khazanah Jaya Sdn Bhd in May 2020. Current Law Minister Takiyuddin said, “at this moment, MACC is unable to provide details of the investigation.”

Why can't details of these contracts be revealed even to Members of Parliament who inquired in the Dewan Rakyat? Due to lack of transparency, the RM30 million Procurement Contract remain shrouded in secrecy.
Is there any real protection for whistleblowers?

In order to encourage more individuals to come forward and whistleblow, there must be several changes made to the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010, for it to have meaning for the public to have confidence in the system.

C4 Center is leading a campaign on Whistleblower protection and one of the activity is national consultation to propose the necessary amendments to the act, in collaboration with the Governance, Integrity, Anti-Corruption Center (GIACC) and Law Department in the Prime Minister Department (BHEUU).

A first round table Webinar (Series 1) was held on November 6, 2020 entitled: Whistleblowers Vital to Break the Chain of Corruption. Is There Protection?

It was attended by 180 participants from both the public and private sector. This was an outstanding number; the discussion were rich in content and analysis. It was also captured by a few media. More engagement sessions will be held in 2021.

Recording of the webinar is available on our YouTube channel @C4Center
Other scandals exposed
Inseparable Nexus: Business & Politics?

A luxury condominium in Bukit Damansara

C4 Center unveiled the nexus between business and politics which clearly fuels money politics and places profit over people, which remains an embedded problem. An example is the Taman Rimba Kiara case, a highway project involving millions in taxpayers’ money, a luxury condominium and drastically impacts the livelihood of adjacent communities.

A recurring figure in these scandals is former Federal Territories minister Tengku Adnan, who has come under heavy public criticism for allegedly abusing his power and position as the then FT Minister to award lucrative developmental projects to his coterie of cronies. He was accused of enriching himself and his family. However, he has denied any improper dealings and engagements.
**A LUXURY CONDOMINIUM IN BUKIT DAMANSARA**

- Jalan Setiakasih at Bukit Damansara is gazetted as “Establishing Housing”
- However, DBKL granted a conditional approval to developer Satin Magic Sdn Bhd for the development of luxury condominium. The area comprises 12 bungalow lots which would require blasting, causing stress to the surrounding area and houses.
- Despite objections from the residents, DBKL has issued Development Order to Satin Magic.
- This occurred during the tenure of Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor as Federal Territories (FT) Minister.

**BANGSAR-DAMANSARA ELEVATED HIGHWAY PROJECT**

- Several residents’ groups and Members of Parliament (MPs) are objecting to the construction of an elevated highway from Sprint Highway-Jalan Maarof interchange to the Sprint Highway-Jalan Semantan interchange.

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**CONFLICT OF INTEREST & ABUSE OF POWER?**

**OVERVIEW**

- Did Tengku Adnan abuse his position which provides personal benefits and favouritism for his business associates?
- Did Tengku Adnan misuse his ministerial position to assert control/influence, especially on the selection of developers?
- Has any investigation been carried out on this highly suspicious project since Tengku Adnan’s tenure?
- Did the corporate equity movements for the benefit of Tengku Adnan amount to gratification?

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**Tengku Adnan**
- Shareholder
- (May 2013-May 2018)
- Federal Territories
- Oversight
- DBKL

**Advance Pacific Sdn Bhd**
- Shareholder & Director
- (24.6% shares)
- Director since May 1992

**Satin Magic Sdn Bhd**
- Shareholder & Director
- (5% shares)
- Project Owner
- Incorporated on 27 Feb 2015
- Proposed development at Jalan Setiakasih (Bukit Damansara)

**Dato’ Gian Kui**
- Director since May 1992

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**As at Jan 2020**

**As at Feb 2020**

**Construction costs of RM211 million is mostly absorbed by DBKL. Hence, wasting millions of taxpayers’ money**

**Project awarded to Malton Berhad related company (Impian Ekspresi) without any open tender process nor prior consultation with the residents**

**Highway is alleged to benefit Malton Berhad related ultra-luxury development project - Pavilion Damansara Heights**

**Traffic Impact Assessment report lacks credibility since it was prepared by a traffic consultant engaged by the contractor itself**

**Project approved during former FT Minister Tengku Adnan’s tenure. Project overseen by former DBKL Deputy Director Sabudin Mohd Salleh**

**Both Tengku Adnan and Sabudin Mohd Salleh have been charged with receiving bribes (for separate corruption cases)**
Corporate Liability Provision

The newly enforced Corporate Liability Provision under Section 17A of the MACC Act which took effect on June 1, 2020, is an incredible step towards improving corporate governance and accountability. C4 published a Corporate Liability Provision video that was well received and meant to guide companies through the basics of the provision.

With due expertise and knowledge on anti-corruption policies, whistleblower protection and good governance, we offer our hand to the MACC in extending training to corporate organisations and government linked companies which may need additional support and resources and offer solutions as to how to put anti-corruption measures as precautions against corrupt practices including developing a sound Whistleblower Protection Policy, that posits itself as a central pillar to the Corporate Liability Provision.

This video is available on our website and YouTube channel @C4Center.
Watered down IPCC Bill

The Independent Police Conduct Commission (IPCC) bill, which was presented in Parliament for first reading on 26 August 2020, after withdrawing last year’s Independent Police Complaints of Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) Act, appears to have reversed a lot of work put in on stakeholder inputs and insights to fortify the contents of the bill. C4 had attended several of these consultations.

PN had tabled a watered down version of the IPCMC Act, even more lame than the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC) Act.

All the amendments made appear to be frustrating and limiting the powers and independence of the IPCC, oversight functions are now a joke as they report back to the home Minister. In no way will this help curb the entrenched corruption in the police force and curtail abuse of power.

C4 center will continue to monitor and highlight corruption involving the police officers and scrutinize the bill and the urgent need for it to pass in Parliament.
Justice prevailed when Former PM Najib Razak was found guilty of all seven charges of abuse of power, criminal breach of trust and money laundering in relation to RM42 million belonging to SRC International Sdn Bhd.

He will be sentenced to 12 years’ jail which would run concurrently and fined RM2.10 million. His appeal against his conviction will commence on Feb 15, 2021. C4 was widely interviewed by local and international media following the verdict and in recognition of our work on 1MDB.

The 19th International Anti-Corruption Conference
(30 November - 5 December 2020)

Dirty money and grand corruption, environmental crimes, trafficking, and organized crime thrive on impunity due to money laundering, tax havens and anonymous companies. The corrupt have been disproportionately benefited by the current pandemic relief efforts as they divert vast amounts of much-needed resources for their private gain.

Cynthia Gabriel was invited to speak on 1MDB and the need to address the loopholes to prevent it from happening along with other panels of global leaders in the fight against corruption. The 19th IACC is the largest international anti-corruption conference held once every 2 years. For the first time it’s held online from 30 November to 5 December. Featuring global leaders in the fight against corruption. Including UN Secretary General Antonio Gutteres.
On stolen assets recovery, Malaysia was short changed when the Perikatan Nasional government accepted a settlement with Goldman Sachs for US$2.5 billion in payment of penalty and US$1.4 billion in asset value, it just does not do justice to the crime Goldman has participated in. It disregards the severity of the crime and sidesteps the prominent role Goldman had played in this entire episode of wide scale corporate fraud. An extraordinary and exorbitant bank fee of US$600 million was charged to 1MDB. All red flags were disregarded. It would also be impossible for bonds totaling to US$6.5 billion to have been issued without thorough management scrutiny and approval. In April 2020, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) returned another RM1.3 billion of recovered 1MDB assets to Malaysia.

C4 Center however marks its grave concern with the political changes, that the funds are currently in the hands of the unelected Perikatan Nasional Coalition government - a government that ruthlessly seized power from the people - the very people who were voted out for their dirty hands in the 1MDB scandal. It is imperative for Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and his cabinet to show a maximum level of transparency. We have the right to know where it is being deposited, and how the monies will be utilised, to benefit the people. Malaysians have that fundamental right to know and to participate in the return of stolen assets. The people of Malaysia are the rightful owners of the returned funds.

THE GOLDMAN SACHS CASE
Stolen asset recovery

There was no transparency and clear explanation from the government, on where the monies will be deposited into and how it will be disbursed.
The NACP is a 5 year plan to combat corruption, drafted by the Pakatan Harapan government. When the sudden change in government took place, the plan was left hanging in the balance, despite Prime Minister Muhyiddin’s assertion that the plan remains in place. More rollbacks than positive strides were seen in the following months of 2020, leaving the plan much to be desired.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INITIATIVES: (As at 4 Feb 2020)

POLITICAL FINANCING
Problem: Money politics. The Political Financing Bill which was supposed to be tabled October last year.
Case: The Chairman of Aset Kayamas Sdn Bhd gave RM2 million worth of cheque to Tengku Adnan, in which Tengku Adnan alleged it was for UMNO’s by elections.
Recommendation: Table the bill as it has been postponed since October 2019. Pass the bill into law.

POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS
Problem: Appointments of political members or associates in the government agencies.
Case: Wan Saiful Wan Jan (BERSATU) as PTPTN chairman; Faiz Fadzil (AMANAH) as the Chairman of Lembaga Kemajuan Ikan Malaysia; Mazlan Aliman (AMANAH) as the Chairman of Lembaga Pertubuhan Peladang Tan Kok Wai (DAP) as the Special Envoy to China.
Recommendation: Ensure appointments and terminations are free from political influence. Review the requirements for appointment and termination of political members or associates.

SUPPORT LETTERS
Problem: Unfair competition in awarding contracts even though support letters are banned in 2018.
Case: In 2019, the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister wrote a letter to the PM for a RM1.4 billion contract be given to the National Farmers’ Association. Then, the PM said Cabinet ministers are allowed to award contracts that are within their respective jurisdictions.
Recommendation: Hold accountable and transparent open tender for fair competition among effective bidders.

ASSET DECLARATION
Problem: Only 160/222 MPs declared their assets even though a motion compelling all MPs, senators and their immediate family members to do so was approved.
Case: How did Zahid Hamidi acquire a fleet of undeclared luxury vehicles?
Recommendation: The Standing Order does not suffice; need a law on Asset Declaration.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT
Problem: The most vulnerable sector to corruption, political interference and illegal activities. The Government Procurement Bill has yet to be drafted by the Ministry of Finance.
Case: Dengkil assemblyperson Adhif Syan Abdullah and his personal aide were among the ones arrested from a drug-fueled party to secure large concessionaires.
Recommendation: Table the bill as it has been postponed since October 2019. Pass the bill into law.

NO GIFT POLICY
Problem: The policy exists in vain.
Case: The Political Secretary of the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry minister received a luxurious watch in return for concessionaires.
Recommendation: Enforce stricter rules and implications. Reinforce related agencies with the capacity to implement the policy.
Public Procurement

Transparency in Procurement; Public Procurement Law;
Political Influence & Conflict of Interest

C4 Center views the findings of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) regarding the vehicle entry permit (VEP) contract award with much concern. It has confirmed our fears yet again that direct negotiations in the public procurement process more often than not ends up with dirty deals and unwelcome influence by politics and power.

The National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) listed Public Procurement (NACP Strategy 3) as one of the priority areas in need of reform, making up 42.8% of the complaints received by the MACC over the years. There is still no Government Procurement Act draft despite the NACP launching a year ago, with those in power taking a ‘business-as-usual’ approach. As such, efforts to draft a Public Procurement law, which began under the previous administration, must continue to ensure legislative power to prevent abuse of power.

C4 Center made the call in light of the Public Accounts Committee’s (PAC) finding that there was indeed political influence in the award of the RM145 million contract. The Transport Ministry in 2015, under MCA’s Liow Tiong Lai, had awarded the contract to TCsens Sdn Bhd, in which the party’s central committee member, Wee Jeck Seng, held 25 percent of the shares. Liow, who was the MCA president, denied knowledge about Wee’s involvement in the company.

PAC Chairman Wong Kah Who said the awarding of the project through direct negotiation under the Transport Ministry failed to achieve the original objective, which was to expedite implementation of projects required by the government. The MACC has been told to investigate the granting of the Vehicle Entry Permit (VEP) project, which was granted by the then MCA-led Transport Ministry to a firm whose shareholder includes an MCA leader, a clear conflict of interest.

An immediate overhaul of the procurement process is needed, with transparency being the aim to deter instances of self-gratification, bribes and potential corruption.
Malaysians must know how their tax monies are being spent.

In Malaysia, the government spends more than RM150 billion, almost one-fifth of Malaysia’s nominal GDP, in procuring goods, works, and services every year. Former Auditor General Ambrin Buang stated that public procurement as “one of the government activities most vulnerable to corruption and it is a complex problem which covers a wide range of illegal activities.”

The NACP must be taken seriously, and work must begin conscientiously. It was supposed to do away with political influences in the process, with online information about the contract made readily available for check and balance. However, with the NACP’s new procurement act nowhere to be seen, events such as the businessman’s drug-fuelled party will continue to happen in the hopes of getting contracts. The public officials who attended the party have demonstrated gross misconduct and highlighted the lack of open and fair competition and dealings in the public procurement process.

The covert drug-fueled party thrown in hopes of government contracts is a terrible expose of the procurement system practiced by Barisan Nasional, where criminal activity is commonplace in the bid to secure cushy deals, making politicians and political parties very vulnerable to corruption.

It has never been about merit and clean competition.
Private Finance Initiatives

The implementation of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in Malaysia has long since raised questions among the public, but saw little discussion in Parliament, barring specific cases such as that of the Vehicle Entry Permit system fiasco. C4 Center will be publishing a paper on PFI in Malaysia in 2021 which aims to provide a layman’s understanding, examine a number of case studies, as well as suggest possible solutions to shore up vulnerabilities and weaknesses in the system in terms of the potential for abuse or corruption.

Cross Border Corruption

A report on Illicit Smuggling is currently being researched and will be published in the first Q1 of 2021. This report will analyse data and will entail the root of the problem, how related it is to money laundering, and the government’s seriousness about dealing with corruption within the Customs department.
China banned 24 types of solid waste imports to the country in January 2018, including plastic waste. This led to a sudden surge in imported and smuggled plastic waste entering Malaysia that year. The illegal processing and indiscriminate dumping of unrecyclable waste led to air and land pollution which severely impacted communities who live close to industrial areas, particularly in Kuala Langat and Klang (Selangor), and Sungai Petani (Kedah).

In 2020, C4 Center commenced research into this issue to investigate how illegality occurred in the plastic recycling industry with such ease. Repeated field visits were made throughout 2020 to Penang, Kedah and Selangor to industrial areas and illegal dumpsites to better understand the severity of the problem. Interviews were conducted with community activists, government officials, elected representatives, and businesses to gather information on the plastic recycling value chains, the regulation of the industry, and legal and policy loopholes which led to poor governance, lack of enforcement, and alleged corrupt practices.

In August 2020, an article highlighting the nexus of pollution, public health and corruption was submitted and published on “Asia Global Online” by the Asia Global Institute, University of Hong Kong.

**Corruption-enabled pollution?**

The Malaysian government in office at that time was aware that plastic waste was being smuggled into the country.
Some of the interviewees who kindly participated in the research project:

11 February 2020 – Interview with YB Tan Kok Yew, then Kedah State Executive Councillor for Industry, Investment, Local Government and Housing, and Mr Zaldi Taib, Director of SWCorp, in Alor Setar, Kedah.


17 February 2020 – Interview with YB Dato‘ Johari bin Abdul, Member of Parliament for Sungai Petani, in Sungai Petani, Kedah.

11 February 2020 – Interview with YB Tan Kok Yew, then Kedah State Executive Councillor for Industry, Investment, Local Government and Housing, and Mr Zaldi Taib, Director of SWCorp, in Alor Setar, Kedah.


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17 February 2020 – Interview with YB Dato‘ Johari bin Abdul, Member of Parliament for Sungai Petani, in Sungai Petani, Kedah.
C4 Roundtable Discussion 26 November 2020 | 9.00 am - 12.30 pm
Malaysia, “Garbage Dump” for Plastic Waste?
Citizens against corruption, complacency, crime, and climate crisis

Panelist:

1. Local governance and planning
   Mr Derek Fernandez
   Advocate & Solicitor; Local Councilor for Petaling Jaya City Council

2. Legal framework for environmental protection
   Ms Mageswari Sangaralingam
   Research Officer, Consumers Association of Penang; Honorary Secretary, Sahabat Alam Malaysia

3. Perspective of the plastics industry
   Dato’ Johnson Yoon
   Secretary, Malaysia Plastic Recycles Association
   Mr CC Cheah
   Vice President, Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association; Chair, MPMA Recycling Committee

4. Grassroots sentiments on industrial pollution
   Ms Pua Lay Peng
   Secretary, Persatuan Tindakan Alam Sekitar Kuala Langat

5. Pollution and public health
   Dr Khor Swee Kheng
   Founder, Malaysian Health Coalition

The Keynote Address was given by Dr Nagulendran Kangayatkarasu, the Deputy Secretary-General (Environmental Management) of the Ministry of Environment and Water. He spoke on the government’s effort to tackle plastic waste mismanagement.

An online closed-door roundtable discussion was organised on 26 November 2020 in collaboration with the Bar Council Environment and Climate Change committee (ECCC) to discuss the preliminary findings from this research. C4’s draft report focusing on good governance and the right to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment was shared in advance with all panelists and participants.

At the roundtable, a panel of six experts spoke on key themes running through the report: local governance and planning, legal framework for environmental law, the plastic recycling industry, grassroots sentiments on industrial pollution, and pollution and public health.

A total of 25 experts from academia, think tanks, community groups, the legal profession, and the plastic industry participated in the roundtable via Zoom. Overall, the report received positive feedback and the event facilitates robust debate on the need for businesses and communities to work together towards better governance and sustainability. An official report launch is planned for early 2021.
Parliamentary Sovereignty

C4 Center called out the mockery of parliamentary sovereignty when PM Muhdyddin announced that the first parliamentary sitting of the new unelected government will only be one day (May 18, 2020). Instead of righting the wrong that had been done through a ruthless power grab that stole the people's vote, the sitting proceeded further to make a mockery of the spirit of democracy and the principle of Parliamentary sovereignty.

The announcement of an economic stimulus package saw the executives dishing out billions of ringgit and setting policies without going through the parliamentary process.

C4 Center is asking on behalf of all tax paying Malaysians:

- What is the source of the funds for the economic stimulus package?
- What are the implementation methods?
- How do we prevent leakages?
- How many contracts have been given out and to whom were these contracts awarded to?
- Is the tender process being followed?
Parliamentary Select Committees

The announcement that MPs have voted to abolish the 10 special select committees from the PH era and replacing them with 9 new ones saw the abolition of the committees in charge of monitoring the budget, gender equality, state and federal relations, and the environment. The caucus on reform and governance has also been scrapped, with much regret. C4 Center called this out as a step backwards. More importantly, the abolition of the committee monitoring the budget represents a severe vulnerability in terms of transparency, and presents the possibility of corrupt individuals taking advantage of less vigilance in the budget.

Horse trading, buying of MPs

During the Sheraton Move as well as the current administration, saw MPs being bought and traded, marking the formation of an unelected government through a power grab. The internal coup had conveniently paved the way for these parties to seize power from the people by trampling on the mandate given in the last general election. All of this was done in a clandestine manner, keeping everyone in the dark, causing massive levels of betrayal and mistrust by the people. Following the power grab, there was also a delay in convening Parliament, which C4 Center questioned as a means of buying time for the unelected government to stabilize and strengthen its power. We called for MACC to be an impartial investigator of the allegations of MPs being bought, and for MPs who were approached to publicly report any approach for them to cross over.
Appointments of Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

C4 Center questioned the choices of UMNO MPs appointed as members of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) when announcements of the appointments along with 10 other MPs were made on Nov 3, 2020. PAC’s purpose is to provide check and balance to the government and to enforce transparency in transactions.

Do they bring integrity or trustworthiness to the PAC?

The appointments of Ahmad Maslan and Mohd Noh Omar seemed counter-intuitive to the spirit and the role of PAC. For Parliament to maintain any credibility for itself and PAC, we urged Speaker Azhar Azizan Harun to reconsider the appointment of these two particular MPs in the committee. Continuing with the appointment would only bring into question the integrity and trustworthiness of PAC as a whole, thus jeopardising the role PAC plays in championing transparency in government.
Calling out political GLC appointments

Following a large number of political leaders being pushed into leadership positions in GLCs after the Perikatan Nasional government took power in Feb 2020, C4 Center called for laws to be enacted that would ban political appointees from being appointed to GLC positions, to maintain good governance and curb corruption. There need to be a political will to overhaul the system by empowering public institutions to act against those indulging in corrupt practices. Unfortunately, that political will is severely lacking.

As long as GLCs are used as vehicles for political power and financial gain, we are going against taxpayers’ human rights.

In light to this issue, C4 Center co-organised this webinar with GerakBudaya to discuss the role of government-linked companies (GLCs) in political funding. The discussion focused on the link between corporate governance and elite feuding. Guest speaker was Prof Edmund Terence Gomez, Professor of Political Economy at the University of Malaya.
C4 continuously advocates for our right to information. Having access to information is key to ensuring that our government can be held to account for its decisions. As citizens, we must never forget that we have the right to know about issues that affect our country. Without access to information, we would face extreme difficulties in voicing out our concerns. In Malaysia, we still lack a federal right to information law that would allow everyone increased access to information about government decisions. Furthermore, secrecy laws like the Official Secrets Act are still used to keep information hidden from us. In 2020, we continued the fight for our right to information!

Now more than ever, the government needs to be transparent! Narrow the scope of the Official Secrets Act so that matters of public interest can be released and only matters related to national security are protected.

At the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) we actively campaigned and continue the fight for our right to information. #MYRightToKnow #HakKamiUntukTahu

Right to Information

Under the Malaysia Agreement of 1963 (MA63), Sabah and Sarawak were equal partners to the former Federation of Malaya. However, its value has eroded dramatically since.

In July 2018, the PH administration formed a Special Cabinet Committee on MA63 to study the granting of autonomy to Sabah and Sarawak. A report was completed in August 2019. However, to this day, the report remains classified under the Official Secrets Act 1972. Now the PN government has set up another committee on MA63. What were the details of the report? Why is there a need for yet another study? Why is the rakyat being kept in the dark?

The government must publish the MA63 report. The people of Sabah, Sarawak, and Malaysia as a whole must be given the information. We have a right to know. #MYRightToKnow #WeWantToKnow

In August 2020, the Ministry of Finance released a list of 101 projects awarded through direct negotiations under the PH administration. Originally awarded by the BN administration to Dhaya Maju LTAT Sdn Bhd at an even higher cost of RM5.26 billion, renegotiations by PH reduced the cost by 15%. However, certain quarters claim that even this figure remains grossly overpriced. How could such an inflated amount even be approved? and why was it done through direct tender?

The government must release all the information regarding the KVDT2 project. The public must be allowed to scrutinise and evaluate the details ourselves. It is our tax money being used.

We have a right to know. #MYRightToKnow #WeWantToKnow

In October 2016, a fire broke out at Sultanah Aminah Hospital, Johor. Six patients were killed. An independent committee was formed to carry out an investigation into the tragedy. A report was completed. However, up until February 24 2020, the report was classified under the Official Secrets Act 1972.

The government cannot continue to conceal this information. We have a right to information. We have a right to know.

#MYRightToKnow #WeWantToKnow

In 2020, the Ministry of Finance released a list of 101 projects awarded through direct negotiations under the PH administration.

At RM4.47 billion, the Klang Valley Double Tracking Phase 2 (KVDT2) project was the most costly of all. Originally awarded by the BN administration to Dhaya Maju LTAT Sdn Bhd at an even higher cost of RM5.26 billion, renegotiations by PH reduced the cost by 15%. However, certain quarters claim that even this figure remains grossly overpriced. How could such an inflated amount even be approved? and why was it done through direct tender?

The government must release all the information regarding the KVDT2 project. The public must be allowed to scrutinise and evaluate the details ourselves. It is our tax money being used.

We have a right to know. #MYRightToKnow #WeWantToKnow
Before the country went into Covid19 pandemic lockdown, we managed to do a courtesy visit to DBKL Mayor’s office, YBhg Dato’ Nor Hisham to update him on the concerns of residents, especially on the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2040. In addition, we highlighted the issues relating to dubious land deals. DBKL was also exhibiting the Draft Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan for 2021-2040 at several locations in KL. This Structure Plan contains DBKL’s proposed development policies for the next 20 years until 2040. We took the opportunity to visit the booths and to scrutinize the Structure Plan as well as put forward C4’s opinions and suggestions.

After the Movement Control Order was lifted, C4 team met YAB Menteri Besar Negeri Sembilan Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun to bring our anti-corruption agenda to the state of Negeri Sembilan. It was also an honor to have Negeri Sembilan’s MACC Director, Chief Senior Assistant Commissioner Zakkuan Talid joining the meeting. With the support from both YAB Menteri Besar and MACC, together we will work through a few programmes to help empower the civil service to stand up and fight corruption.

Advocating our good governance agenda
Cynthia Gabriel was invited as a guest speaker at the first episode of National Oversight & Whistleblowers (NOW)’s weekly forum Let’s Talk: Whistleblowers in Malaysia, on what is a whistleblower, what happens when they carry out the act of whistleblowing and what are the protections that we have for them and would the protection be enough for the risks they have to face?

In conjunction with the International Anti-Corruption Day 2020 #IACD2020, our founding director Cynthia Gabriel appeared on AWANI Consider This to share her insights on Malaysia’s progress in preventing & addressing corruption in 2020.
As part of C4’s outreach program, Sheefa Ahmad, C4’s Comms Officer spoke about career in human rights with the human rights & activism wing (ASASI) of the United Kingdom Malaysia Law Students’ Association (KPUM) at their inaugural Pathways event where C4 Center has been a partner for the past 3 years.

Sheefa Ahmad of C4 talks to us about the veritable rash of corruption cases involving our former leaders under the former government. Najib, Rosmah, Zahid, Tengku Adenan – quite a list. C4 are monitoring these, she says, as part of the reform agenda so long promised to the people. The information on the corridors of power is so much like a soap opera – doomed solar projects in Sarawak and household squabbles between the PM and the real power behind the throne – that the image of our leaders as figures of respect has become indelibly tarnished. As one case leads to another, the people become more enlightened and more able to make an enlightened choice at the ballot box.

Asian Think Tank Network Policy Forum, attended by 50+ think tank leaders from all over ASEAN! The forum aimed to increase connectivity and collaboration between think tanks by sharing experiences to grow together. Our Founding Director, Cynthia Gabriel spoke on Effective Anti-Corruption Approaches & Tools.

Our Founding Director Cynthia Gabriel was invited to speak on corporate liability and private sector corruption in general.

Speaking engagements

Sudhagaran Stanley, C4’s Northern Region Coordinator, Centre to Combat Corruption and Crime (Cc) was the guest speaker at the event. He gave his insights on BFM on the former Chief Minister of Sabah acquittal of all 46 corruption and money laundering charges, the second high-profile discharge of personalities linked to the previous Barisan Nasional administration since the Perikatan Nasional government was installed in March.
Cynthia Gabriel spoke to BFM on a number of current issues: Speaking engagements
The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have dramatic effects for the rule of law in many parts of the world, including the Asia Pacific region. As countries rush to dispense economic stimulus packages to confront the new wave of unemployment and economic insecurity affecting their populations, they also are expediting massive procurement contracts for medical equipment with little scrutiny or oversight.

These gaps in rule of law in turn are exacerbating the public health crisis. Representing Malaysia, our Founding Director Cynthia Gabriel was invited to speak on how governments, anti-corruption advocates, and rule of law stakeholders in the Asia Pacific region respond to this situation.

The 19th International Anti-Corruption Conference
(30 November - 5 December 2020)

C4 Center was again honored to be among the panel with global leaders in the fight against corruption.

The 19th IACC is the largest international anti-corruption conference held once every 2 years. For the first time it’s held online from 30 November to 5 December. Featuring global leaders in the fight against corruption. Including UN Sec gen Antonio Gutteres. Many interesting panels and workshops with cross linkages to other themes.

C4 via its Founding Director has been elected as vice chair of the UNCAC Coalition, a platform of 300 over organisations around the world, fighting corruption and pushing for accountable governance.
International recognition


It was an honor for C4 Center when our Founding Director Cynthia Gabriel was invited to be among the speakers at the United Nations ESCAP, High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: “Towards an Ecosystem of Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity”.

The virtual event aims to discuss possible means to address the shortcomings identified in the interim report published by the FACTI Panel on 24 September 2020 and it brought together high-level representatives from Member States, along with leaders from the private sector, civil society and academia in the region.

The interim report analyses the gaps, vulnerabilities and impediments present in the current international systems related to financial accountability, transparency and integrity issues.

It finds that these systems can help countries prevent the drain of resources from development, contributing to achieving the 2030 agenda, but they lack coordination, leaves gaps and may overlap and even conflict with each other.

The report can be downloaded at: https://www.factipanel.org/reports

The recorded session is available on Youtube.
C4’s Internship Program

C4’s Internship program offers a human rights and activism experience by working together alongside our experienced researchers and human rights activists. It is to encourage future graduates to increase their awareness on issues related to social justice and good governance.

Out interns assisted our research officers and were also exposed to investigative research work as well as learning communications and advocacy. This year we had an international student from University of Groningen, Netherlands, law students from University Malaya, BAC College and University of Bristol, UK through the KPUM ASASI partnership. Due to Covid-19 lockdowns, we only received 1 batch of internship in 2020.
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**PROJECTS & PROGRAMMES**

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For any enquiries, please write to info@c4center.org

Financial report, Donors & Acknowledgment

Our Thanks

We would like to thank our local and global funders, namely the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the Open Society Foundation (OSF), International Republican Institute (IRI), for their generous financial support.

Without the financial assistance from our donor partners and Malaysians dedicated to fighting corruption, we will not be able to have produced such outcomes and impacts for Malaysia.

Also a big acknowledgement to C4 team members for their hard work and dedication. It took our combined efforts to deliver concrete outcomes to the public.
The team.

L-R: Sheefa Ahmad (Comms & SocMed Officer), Wong Pui Yi (Investigative Research Officer), Cynthia Gabriel (Founding Director), Farhana Bahrin (Accounts Officer), Arief Hamizan (Legal Research Officer), Lalitha Kunaratnam (Sr Investigative Research Officer), Xavier Kong (Investigative Research Officer), Oh Shu Ann (Content Researcher), Sudhagaran Stanley (Northern Region Coordinator), and Fadiah Nadwa Fikri, who left us in July 2020 to pursue her PhD at the National University of Singapore.
Rights group calls for probe into reports of harassment against activists, opposition

C4 claims letting Umno back into power could see leaders escape corruption...

Himpunan bantah koraja 'pintu belakang' di Dataran Merdeka | The Malaysian Insight

Penang C4 activist held over post critical of MCO arrests

C4 Founder to be quizzed by police, activists flay use of oppressive laws
The End