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Koh: Sungai Bakap by-election not a single-issue campaign

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PENANG, Thurs. - Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said today that the Barisan Nasional was not making the Sungai Bakap by-election "a single-issue" campaign when it urged the electorate to vote BN as a show of support and confidence for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"No, it is not a single-issue campaign because there are other issues involved. It is, however, a key issue," he said when asked to comment on allegations by DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang that the BN was turning the by-election into a vote of confidence for Dr Mahathir as Prime Minister.

"We asked the people to unite and work closely with the BN because it is the only political organisation in this country that has the commitment, tradition, mechanism, sincerity, and track record to resolve the current economic problems," Koh said.

"Over the last 10 years especially, by maintaining the growth rate and keeping inflation low, we have achieved something unprecedented in the history of any developing country with the exception of China," he said.

"No doubt there will be tremendous pressure on prices because of the drop in currency, but we are determined to reduce the negative impact by increasing exports and local content of manufactured products and promoting tourism," he added.

Speaking to newsmen after attending a Deepavali open house hosted by State People's Progressive Party chairman Dr Loga Bala Mohan in Bukit Mertajam this afternoon, Koh said while there was no denying that the nation's economy was facing a crisis, so were the economies of other countries throughout the world.

"The fact that we are not alone in facing these problems shows that it is not a negative reflection of our Government.

"On the contrary, our Prime Minister now has the distinction of being the first leader in the world who dared to speak out against this problem, and the current currency trading arrangement or lack of arrangement.

"And now he is getting support from the Commonwealth, and other nations, so it is time for the people to close ranks and show their support for him and the BN Government through the Sungai Bakap by-election," he said.

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