

Perkasa heading towards extremism, warns DAP
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Penang DAP has warned that Malay rights pressure group Perkasa is spreading its supremacist agenda, worsening divisions and ratcheting up tensions within the country.

The party's state secretary Ng Wei Aik (left) said a "dangerous development" was brewing in Perkasa, which he said is spreading its "extreme" agenda.

He recounted that the group's president Ibrahim Ali had once called for May 13 to be remembered as a special day, criticising those against the holding of the event for that purpose as racists.

Ibrahim, who is Pasir Mas MP, had also called for the setting up of a May 13 museum to commemorate the riots that occurred 42 years ago, Ng added.

The 1969 unrest saw hundreds of civilians killed in the worst racial strife the country has seen.

The commemorative rally - organised by the Gerakan Kebangkitan Rakyat - was scheduled to occur on May 13 last year at a stadium in Kuala Terengganu, but was eventually postponed to a later date to commemorate 'Malay unity'.

Speaking to Malaysiakini yesterday, Ng described the BN-led government's support for the group's recently established 'Briged Setia Negara' sub-grouping under civilian paramilitary group Rela as serving to sponsor racism and raising racial tensions to the worst levels since Independence 54 years ago.

The government has denied any special unit had been set up for Perkasa members in Rela.

"This new development mirrors that of the Nazi party's SS or Protection Squadron," quipped the Komtar state assemblyperson, who has also been accused of being racist by Indian Muslim traders early this year.

The Nazi SS served as the armed wing of Adolf Hitler's totalitarian National Socialists party in 1930s and 1940s' Germany.

Ng also criticised Perkasa's website that he said allows readers to post comments relating to calls for ethnic cleansing.

"Despite their claims of not being racists, they are hinting of further divisions (between Malaysians), and perhaps (allowing for their supporters to call for) violence to attain their goals," Ng added.

On Saturday, Perkasa organised a gathering in Alor Setar attended by about 800 people, in which Ibrahim (above) came out strongly to denounce the two BN Chinese-based parties MCA and Gerakan for questioning Malay rights.

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamed, who is the group's patron, also spoke at the event.

Ng said by supporting the likes of Perkasa, Umno has worsened racial divisions in order to keep its iron grip on power.

Umno exists today only in name and is not the same party that was created in 1946. That party was "destroyed" by Mahathir in 1987, rendered illegal by the court, and re-registered as Umno Baru.

"Members of the ruling elite in BN have come to see their rule as an inheritance from our founding fathers.

"Every time they are caught with their pants down in corruption and other mismanagement of the government, they run to (display) the racial card and threaten the people not to question their rights as leaders," alleged Ng.

He described as "sickening" BN's manner of playing the racial card, and accused its leading component party Umno Baru of having betrayed the federal constitution.

Ng said while DAP does not challenge the special rights of Malays and bumiputeras, it is against the exploitation of those special benefits by 'Umnoputras' while others in the same community are left to languish in poverty.

"Umno also use the non-Malays as scapegoats for every error (they make), or when explaining to the Malay community why their lives have not improved under Umno and BN rule," he said.

"Umno has now shown it has no intentions of changing its corrupt and racist ways... Malaysians have to unite, set aside all differences. Only with unity can Umno's iron grip on Malaysia be broken," he added.

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