

**DAP's Malay campaign hits rough start**  
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**By Leven Woon**

DAP's latest attempt to woo Malay voters through a series of ceramah held by its Malay leaders hit a rough start last night with a low Malay turnout at its maiden session.

Out of the 100-odd crowd at the ceramah in Subang Jaya, only 30 were Malays.

NONEspeaking at the event were Lim Guan Eng's political secretary Zairil Khir Johari (left) and bloggers Ariff Sabri Abdul Aziz and Aspan Alias.

The ceramah co-organiser Rokatini, DAP's webzine, is nevertheless bullish that the ceramah will help to highlight the party's commitment to the community and the national language.

"Never mind if the Malay participation was low, what we are trying to convey is DAP is consistent in its efforts to honour the usage of Bahasa Malaysia.

"So the speakers will continue speaking mostly in Bahasa Malaysia as it is the national language and is understood by all," said Rokatini coordinator Mazir Ibrahim, who hosted the ceramah.

The series, said Mazir, will expand to Johor, Negeri Sembilan and Kuala Lumpur in its later installments.

It will also introduce several young Malay professionals who will be announcing their membership to the Chinese-majority party.

According to Zairil, the objectives of the series were to campaign for DAP and Pakatan while "explaining to the public that DAP is not a chauvinist and racist party".

'DAP anti-semua?'

Zairil, who initiated the idea of the ceramah series together with Rokatini and the DAP headquarters, believes he has demonstrated this spirit in his speech last night.

Speaking on the topic 'Why I joined DAP', Zairil said the 46-year-old party has been the target of much slander, none of which holds water.

"BN has accused DAP as communists and perpetrators of the May 13 (riots), but if these were true, the party would have been dissolved.

"And now Umno accuses the (DAP-led) Penang government of being anti-Malay, yet at the same time MCA said we are anti-Chinese because we don't give them enough contracts.

"Recently Penang Umno Youth even claimed that we are anti-Indian because (chief minister) Lim Guan Eng did not mention the Indians in one of his speeches.

"In that case, DAP must be against all segments of society. Then we must be 'anti-semua' (anti-everyone)," he quipped.

Zairil, who is son of former education minister Mohd Khir Johari, said that the Penang government in reality adopts all-inclusive policies, as proven by the fact that Malay companies make up 70 percent of the contracts awarded under open tenders.

Umno no longer relevant

dap conference shah alam 080112 ariff sabri abdul aziz sakmongkol Meanwhile, former one-term Umno assemblyperson Ariff Sabri (right), better known by Sakmongkol in blogosphere, explained that his decision to quit the party was because "Umno is already in a form that cannot contain its internal development".

"Society is moving towards the direction of anti-racism and anti-corruption. It has made Umno less relevant to the future generations.

"That's why smarter Malays have left Umno," said Ariff.

Another speaker, former Negeri Sembilan Umno veteran Aspan Alias, argued that Umno had ceased to exist since the dissolution of the "old" Umno in 1988.

That year was a watershed in the ruling party's history when the Kuala Lumpur High Court declared Umno illegal under the Societies Act, and former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad registered a new party, Umno Baru.

"The Umno Baru might look similar, but it is different in terms of form, size and struggle. It is fake, and fake things can't last for long," he said.

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