

Kula defends Kit Siang in wake of Dr M's attack

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By Terence Netto

MP for Ipoh Barat M Kulasegaran told a DAP-organised ceramah in Malacca last night that former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has things the wrong way round when he exhorted Johoreans to hasten the end of Lim Kit Siang's career.

Stumping before a crowd of about 500 people in Klebang, a state ward in the parliamentary constituency of Tangga Batu, the DAP national vice-chairperson said that at 72 years of age, Kit Siang would have gone in for retirement but the need to "reverse the effects of Mahathir's misrule has compelled the postponement of the party adviser's plans".

"Kit Siang is too much of a patriot to let pass the chance offered by growing public consciousness of the effects of BN misrule," said Kulasegaran (right), the main speaker at the rally aimed at boosting the party's chances of winning Klebang, one of eight state seats that the DAP is contesting in Malacca in GE13.

Kulasegaran said a higher call to national duty has prompted Kit Siang to abandon the safety of his incumbency in Ipoh Timor and possible thoughts of retirement for the risks entailed in trying to oust the MCA from their stronghold in Gelang Patah in Johor.

"It's strange that Mahathir who only retired as PM in his late 70s should argue that it is past time for Kit Siang, who is just 72, to quit and that voters in Johor should compel him to do so by defeating him in Gelang Patah," mused Kulasegaran.

He said that just as the political tsunami of 2008 destroyed the myth of BN's invincibility, so DAP's decision to challenge strongly for parliamentary and state seats in Johor may lead to the destruction of the notion that the state is a BN fortress.

'Malacca within reach of Pakatan'

Kulasegaran said voters in the rest of the country are apt to think that Malacca is out of reach for Pakatan Rakyat.

"But I have been coming to Malacca for ceramah in the last five years and I have seen growing signs that this state is not immune to change," he opined.

"Remember, it was here in 2007 that Chief Minister Ali Rustam said that BN has ruled for half a century and will continue to rule for another 50 years," he recalled.

"Four months after that boast an opposition wave swept the country in GE12, though its effects were not greatly felt in Malacca," said Kulasegaran.

"The growing crowds I have seen in the last five years tell me that Malaccans may not want to be left behind," he opined.

The DAP won Kota Melaka in the last election and are in with a chance in Alor Gajah.

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