

MIC urges voters not to back Zul Noordin

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By Rajvinder Singh & G Surach, The Malay Mail

An MIC vice-president yesterday openly voiced his discontentment with the Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate for Shah Alam, Zulkifli Noordin, and urged Indians not to give the Perkasa leader their support.

M Saravanan said he could not forgive Zulkifli for what he had said about the Indians. He said Zulkifli was not worthy of the Indian support.

"If I were to say something disrespectful against the Muslims and then apologise, do you think they will ever accept?" he asked.

Saravanan (right) said he greatly respected caretaker Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's decision, but believed Zulkifli degraded BN and was a disgrace to the coalition.

"However, I strongly urge the community to give BN their undivided support in all other areas, but he (Zulkifli) does not deserve our votes," he said.

Zulkifli earned the wrath of the Indian community when a video of him uttering the work *keling* — which Indians across the world consider derogatory — went viral.

Once a lawyer to Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim, Zulkifli had also allegedly questioned the purity of the Ganges river, which is considered sacred by the Hindus.

Could lose up to 70 per cent votes

On March 6, 2010, Zulkifli was dismissed from PKR following the unanimous decision of a party disciplinary panel.

He then went on to become a BN-friendly independent MP, critical of the Opposition.

MIC strategic adviser S Vell Paari had warned the MIC leadership that by fielding Zulkifli, the party risked losing Indian votes which, he said, could well decide the outcome in certain states like Selangor.

Vell Paari sent a text message to MIC president G Palanivel urging him to convey

his concerns to Najib. He said that by fielding Zulkifli, the party could lose 50 per cent to 70 per cent of the Indian votes.

Despite this, Zulkifli was named a BN-friendly candidate when BN unveiled its Selangor candidates list.

This further irked Vell Paari, who is the son of former MIC president S Samy Vellu, who said there were about 15,000 Indian voters in Shah Alam, 30,000 in Kota Raja, 20,000 in Kapar and 17,000 in Subang, many of whom were upset.

Since being named a candidate, Zulkifli has tried to fend off criticism against him by apologising to the Indians.

On the second night of his campaign trail, the Perkasa vice-president claimed he became aware that Malaysians of different races and religions could live together in harmony.

Pakatan Rakyat blamed

He also tried to blame Pakatan Rakyat for his previous extremist and racist politics, saying: "I have said it in many places. I practised extremist politics, racist politics and chauvinism because the Opposition — DAP, PKR, PAS — taught me that."

MIC Youth leader T Mohan said that while he condemned Zulkifli for his past statements, it was ultimately up to the people to decide when voting.

"What he has uttered is wrong. Therefore, I strongly object to it. But other leaders, especially from the Opposition, have also hurt Indian sentiments," he said.

Mohan was more sympathetic than Saravanan, saying the community should give Zulkifli a second chance since he had officially apologised.

"Other opposition leaders have also hurt Indian sentiments, such as Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who allegedly uttered derogatory statements over the temple and mosque issue in Penang, as well as Azmin Ali, who allegedly labelled the Indian community 'pariahs'. Where is their apology?" he said.

