

## **May 13 riots, race card played up in Johor**

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JOHOR The stiff political contest in Johor has turned into an ugly battle with the race card being flashed and the May 13 racial riots being made the bogeyman again to create fear, especially among Malay voters.

On Friday Malaysiakini witnessed BN campaigners distributing leaflets in a night market at Taman University, Skudai that accused DAP Gelang Pahat candidate Lim Kit Siang as the mastermind behind the 1969 tragedy.

The leaflets also attached an interview of former Kuala Lumpur City Hall director-general Nordin Abdul Razak published in Umno-owned Mingguan Malaysia in which he claimed he saw Kit Siang with anti-Malay demonstrators during the incident.

Yesterday a DAP campaigner in Tanjong Piai parliamentary constituency showed Malaysiakini a booklet entitled 'DAP racist' which he alleged was distributed by the rival camp in Malay villages.

Comprising 26 pages, it accused DAP of causing the May 13 incident, being a proxy of Singapore's ruling party Peoples Action Party to spread the influence of its then prime minister Lee Kuan Yew in the peninsula, and turning Penang into a "second Singapore".

It compiled several controversial remarks made by DAP leaders before such as secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, chairperson Karpal Singh, national publicity secretary Tony Pua, Perak chief Ngeh Koo Ham and secretary Nga Kor Ming, and incumbent Kota Alam Shah assemblyperson M Manoharan, to back the allegation that DAP is against the Malays and Islam.

Although the identity of printer and publisher of these campaign material were not stated, which is a violation of election regulations, fingers were pointed at Umno.

Raising the sense of insecurity of the Malays by portraying Pakatan Rakyat as a threat to Malay rights has been a tactic repeatedly used by Umno during elections to unite the community under its flag.

This approach is particularly effective in Johor, where the Malays have been indoctrinated with a strong sense of Malay nationalism and supremacy under

Umno's political hegemony for almost seven decades.

However, Pakatan was quick to drive its machinery to counter the racial charges.

DVDs of Kit Siang's interview with party organ Rokatini have been distributed in Malay villages. He explains in the interview that he had nothing to do with May 13 incident as he was not in the Klang Valley when it happened.

Another DVD which contains the testimonies of PAS deputy president Mohd Sabu and national laureate A Samad Said on DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng is also being distributed in Malay villages.

PAS leaders, who command a higher influence within the Malay community, are giving their best to defend their comrades in DAP against racist labels.

The Islamic party's vice-president Salahuddin Ayub, who is contesting both the parliamentary constituency of Pulai and state constituency of Nusa Jaya, told the Malays in most of his ceramah that the dominant political position of the Malays will never be compromised by the Chinese.

Using the number of seats contested by the three parties, Salahuddin stressed that DAP is given the least.

Leaflets printed by PAS list out the seat allocations among the three parties in 2008 general election to convey the same message.

"Is (PKR de facto leader) Anwar (Ibrahim) a Chinese? Is Tok Guru (PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat) a Japanese?"

"The agong is Malay, the royal family is Malay, the district officer is Malay, the chief justice is Malay, the inspector-general of police is also Malay. Why are we so afraid? Can Lim Kit Siang chase us all away?"

"Are we going to burn down Nusa Jaya? Are we going to evict the Malays?" he queried during a ceramah in a Malay village located in Pulai on Friday night.

Prominent leader

The coalition also roped in prominent leader like former Umno minister Zaid Ibrahim to convince the Malay constituents that Kit Siang is not and never was an anti-Malay leader.

Zaid (right) was later invited to be the adviser to the DAP in tackling Malay sentiment.

In addition, Kit Siang has been issuing statements in Malay language since nomination.

In his latest Malay statement released yesterday, the veteran politician pointed out that the DAP has fielded Malay candidates in each general election since its first election in 1969, contrary to Umno which does not accept non-Malays as members.

"As many as six Malay representatives from DAP have won state and parliamentary seats, including Ibrahim Singgeh and Ahmad Nor."

In this general election, DAP has fielded three parliamentary candidates in the peninsula - Mahdzir Ibrahim (Tanjong Piai), Zairil Khir Johari (Bukit Bendera) and Mohd Ariff Sabri Abdul Aziz (Raub), as well as other bumiputra candidates in Sabah and Sarawak.

With the campaign intensifies in the final lap, it would not be surprised to see more racist sentiments and fear being raised to frighten the voters.

The electoral result on the night of May 5 will tell whether racial politics is ready to leave Malaysia.

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