

'Perkasa will become political party if Umno dissolves'

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Malay rights group Perkasa will turn itself into a political party to represent the struggle of the Malays if Umno dissolves itself to merge with other BN component parties, Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali said.

The suggestion to merge all BN component parties into a single multiracial party is not relevant at present, Ibrahim contends, Utusan Malaysia reported today.

This is because Umno, which represents the Malays, has yet to elevate the position of the Malays to the height of the other races, especially that of the Chinese in the economic and education sectors, he said.

"If Umno is dissolved, the voice of the Malays and bumiputera will disappear. Even now we can see - when we talk about the rights guaranteed by the constitution - that we are accused as being racist," the Umno-owned daily quotes Ibrahim as saying.

Both Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Sabah also disagree with the proposal made by Gerakan acting president Chang Ko Youn that Umno - as the biggest party in BN - should lead the merger.

'A merger will also stifle ethnic minorities'

PRS president James Jemut Masing told Utusan that such a merger would stifle the voice of ethnic minorities, such as the Iban and Kadazan.

NONEMasing (right) said the current structure of BN suited the multiracial society of Malaysia.

"We need to look at this issue more comprehensively because ethnic minorities in Sabah and Sarawak also need to have their own channels and parties," he said.

Masing's view is shared by LDP president Liew Vui Keong, who told the Malay daily that every component party in the BN represented the interests of a certain race or community in Malaysia.

Hence, the defeat of certain parties in the 13th general election should not be used as the justification to form a single BN party, Liew said.

MCA vice-president Chor Chee Heung told Berita Harian that any such merger should start with non-Umno parties that represent the Chinese and Indians, such as MCA and MIC.

This would pave the way for a bigger merger among other component parties in the future, Chor said.

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