

Chua: Dr M made Umno stronger, but BN weaker

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Dr Chua Soi Lek today said that Dr Mahathir Mohamad had made Umno politically stronger during his tenure as prime minister, leaving Umno's coalition partners in BN "powerless".

The former MCA president said that Malay parliamentary seats have increased in the last three general elections, and this has sparked off a worry among the Chinese community.

"Chinese are generally worried about a very strong Malay government lest their political, economic status and rights will be encroached on," Chua (right) said in a statement posted on his blog today.

"The New Economic Policy (NEP) and its poor implementation had posed a greater worry to the Chinese who ended up losing faith in the government," Chua said.

The former health minister said that now, Umno supreme council decisions often became cabinet decisions, further causing an adverse impact on Umno's partners in BN.

"I had mentioned before during the BN convention that to the people, Umno is the taiko (master) and if it becomes arrogant and dictatorial, it will have an adverse impact on other component parties," Chua said.

Meanwhile, he also disagreed with Mahathir's claim that economic liberalisation by the government was a way to appease Chinese voters.

"The bumiputras should not see economic liberalisation as a compromise to Chinese on economy and be upset with the liberalisation policy," he said.

"The income gap does not happen between the bumiputras and the non-bumiputras, it happens within the bumiputras too. In Kuala Lumpur, there are rich bumiputras and poor bumiputras; the bumiputras in the peninsula and Sabah and Sarawak, too, have income discrepancy," Chua said.

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