

## **Ibrahim denies Perkasa will contest in GE14**

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Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali has denied a report that says the right-wing movement is planning to contest in the next general election by setting up a political party.

When contacted, Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali told Malaysiakini: "This is not true."

Malay daily Sinar Harian reported today that Pahang Perkasa leaders had quit en masse over the apparent decision, with its leader Abdul Wahid Abdul Manap stating that the movement had agreed to back the leadership of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Perkasa secretary-general Syed Hassan Syed Ali also denied that Perkasa is planning to register itself as a political party.

"There was never any decision by the top leadership to turn Perkasa into a political party," Syed Hassan (left) said in a statement today.

Syed Hassan blamed Abdul Wahid for misinterpreting the organisation's circular to its members.

"Ninety percent of Perkasa parliamentary leaders in Pahang still want to stay on after receiving clarification from me about the circular, which was misunderstood by the Pahang Perkasa chief and represented at the meeting last night," he said.

Abdul Wahid had claimed the July 10 circular signed by Perkasa information chief Hassan Basri stated that Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali has agreed to look into the possibility of being the new Malay "bargaining power".

'Not contesting under Perkasa banner'

Abdul Wahid sees this as an attempt to replace Umno, which is currently seen as the main Malay political party, and led an en masse resignation.

Syed Hassan said the outgoing Pahang Perkasa will be replaced and thanked them for their services.

He said Perkasa intends to participate in the coming general election but said it was only for organising programmes and campaign to convince the Malay community to choose the right party.

However, he added, any Perkasa member can contest in the 14th general election under

existing political parties or as independents.

Syed Hassan gave the example of Ibrahim, who contested as an independent in Pasir Mas, and former Perkasa vice-chief Zulkifli Nordin (right), who contested under BN's banner in Shah Alam in the last general election.

Previously, the government had admitted to funding Perkasa, whose patron is former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Mahathir had once said that groups like Perkasa were needed because Umno, under Najib, no longer protected the rights of the Malays because Najib was trying to win back non-Malay votes.

However, critics claim that Umno has “sub-contracted” its “extremism” to Perkasa.

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