

**No rift, Dr M still tangos to Perkasa's tune**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**Jan 19, 2015**

Quashing a news report claiming otherwise, Dr Mahathir Mohamad has revealed that his sentiments are in tune with Perkasa, especially on non-Muslims who cross the line.

Clarifying the issue in a blog post today, the former premier also stated that he is not part of the right-wing movement, renowned for its incendiary remarks on matters of race and religion.

"I must say there is no basis to my distancing myself from Perkasa. For starters, I am not formally attached to them.

"However, I must admit that I do support their views. Especially when it comes to reacting against extremist views of the non-Malays," he said.

Mahathir, who was prime minister for more than two decades, noted that groups like Perkasa did not exist during his tenure.

However, he said the rise of extremist views among non-Malays had fertilised the ground for such movements to mushroom.

"Perkasa would not have existed had it not been for the rise in extremist views among the non-Malays, questioning Malay rights and privileges when Malays themselves did not question the rights of non-Malays nor denied the privileges accorded to them in the constitution.

"If at all, I may have shared with Perkasa some of my ideas and my thoughts may have coincided with theirs," he added.

Earlier, Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali also dismissed the Malaysian Insider report, claiming that the movement shared an unbreakable bond with the former premier.

He said Mahathir would always support Perkasa, "now and forever".

Ibrahim also clarified that Mahathir was never appointed as patron of Perkasa as reported by the media.

Quoting a source, the news portal had claimed that the pair had parted ways because Mahathir was unhappy over how Perkasa triggered and handled racially sensitive issues, including Ibrahim's Bible-burning controversy, which sparked outrage among the Christian community.

Mahathir's stand had somewhat crushed his daughter Marina's hope of her father

endorsing the 'Eminent Malays', known as G25.

Comprised mainly of top civil servants who served under Mahathir, the group had penned a letter to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak on the rise of extremist voices such as Perkasa and Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (Isma).

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