

Perkasa now split between pro-Najib, pro-Mahathir camps

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Malay-rights group Perkasa today admitted its members are now split between those supporting Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and those for former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Perkasa secretary-general Syed Hassan Syed Ali said the split occurred following the presence of its president Ibrahim Ali during the signing of the Citizen's Declaration on March 4.

"There are now camps within Umno members in Perkasa. There are Umno members leaving Perkasa by cutting their membership cards to show dissatisfaction with the president and his leadership.

"They claimed that Perkasa has veered from its original struggle," he said.

Last week, nine members from Pengkalan Chepa and 27 others from Kapar had cut-up their Perkasa membership cards.

Similarly, there were also members from Gombak and Kuala Langat who threatened to cut-up their Umno membership cards.

Syed Hassan added that Perkasa members who support Mahathir want to cut up their Umno membership cards.

Ibrahim admitted that he was present during the signing ceremony but did not sign the Citizens' Declaration because "his name and Perkasa cannot be separated".

In a recent interview with Malaysiakini, Ibrahim said even though the signatories had done so in their personal capacity, "in the times of internet, there are parties that will make their own interpretation".

Mahathir and other Opposition leaders had signed the Citizen's Declaration to demand for Najib's resignation as prime minister.

Its signatories include former deputy prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin, former Kedah menteri besar Mukhriz Mahathir and former MCA president Ling Liong Sik.

'Instigated by Umno'

Commenting further, Syed Hassan claimed that Perkasa members who left had done so under instigation by Umno leaders.

"Several Perkasa parliament chairpersons had informed the president (Ibrahim) that they were coaxed by Umno leaders to disband Perkasa (branches) in their constituency.

"I believe there were many other Perkasa chairpersons who were also coaxed to do the same," he said.

Syed Hassan, as such, warned Umno leaders against attempts to divide Perkasa.

"Perkasa is warning Umno leaders who are anti-Perkasa. Do not continue to stir the hornet's nest. Do not wait until Umno members in Perkasa lose their patience.

"Do not wait until the Perkasa leadership is no longer able to prevent them from leaving Umno.

"Do not challenge them (to leave Umno) because Perkasa will not lose anything. Don't allow BN to suffer if they lost their patience," he stressed.

He, however, also urged Perkasa members who want to quit Umno, to do so using the proper channels at the Umno office instead of cutting-up their membership cards.

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