

**Dr M: Perkasa helped BN bag Hulu S'gor**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**April 29, 2010**  
**Regina Lee**

Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad today suggested that Malay rights advocate Perkasa can be credited for the swing in Malay votes for BN during the Hulu Selangor by-election.

mahathir ikmal presidential lecture 290410"Maybe it's because of Perkasa, (most) Malays voted for BN. We will never know. (In the past) there are so many Malays who won't support BN. If (BN does not support Perkasa), we may not get the Malay vote.

"And if we don't have the Chinese vote as well, the vote will go to Pakatan (Rakyat) lah," he told a press conference after delivering a lecture titled 'Malaysia as a Maritime Nation - Are We There?' at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

It is estimated that 65 percent of Malays in Hulu Selangor back BN in last Sunday's by-election.

The elder statesmen also rubbished claims that Perkasa is driving a wedge between the component parties in BN, namely between Umno, MCA and Gerakan.

"There are other people who have said a lot of things causing Perkasa to reply," he said, insinuating that Perkasa's controversial statements were merely a rebuttal to remarks made by its detractors.

"If you look, (Perkasa) balances out extremist Chinese groups, which have previously said that there are no such thing as Malays (race), as published in (local English daily) The Sun.

"So (Perkasa) is forced to reply. That's why racial issues should not be discussed publicly. If one person says something, the other will reply. If you accuse someone of being a racist, they can also say that you are one," said Mahathir.

When asked if Umno should distance itself from Perkasa, he said that the party would do so only if MCA would distance themselves from Chinese extremists.

perkasa first agm 270310 bigger kerisThe former prime minister has been closely associated with the right-wing group, even launching its first annual general meeting earlier this year.

Perkasa, helmed by independent MP Ibrahim Ali, has courted much controversy and spotlight for themselves despite being formed only two years ago.

Most recently, Ibrahim has urged Prime Minister Najib Razak to withhold aid and allocations to the Chinese community because it is clear that the Chinese and Indians did not support BN. They do not appreciate what has been given by the BN government".

Need to find why Chinese abandon BN

Meanwhile, Mahathir said that the government will need to study why Chinese voters have deserted BN.

"But if all Chinese support BN, and we don't have Malay support, we will still lose. In this country, everybody's support is important."

mahathir ikmal presidential lecture 290410When asked if the poor Chinese showing in the recent Hulu Selangor by-election was because of the recent troubles that have been plaguing MCA, Mahathir said that no party is without weaknesses.

"All component parties in BN have their own problems, not just MCA, but also MIC, Gerakan and even Umno."

In the by-election, despite the MIC's P Kamalanathan 1,725 vote-majority win, Chinese support for BN have plummeted from 35 percent to 25 percent as compared to showings in the 2008 general elections.

When asked about the critical political biography on himself written by Barry Wain that has been recently given the green light by the Home Ministry, Mahathir said that Wain is entitled to launch the book.

"I've read the draft," he said, when asked if he would be getting himself a copy.

About 800 copies of the book, 'Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohamad in Turbulent Times' was held up held up in Port Klang since being confiscated in November, 2009.

The book had alleged that Mahathir was responsible for RM100 billion in financial scandals during his 22-year tenure as premier.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/130540>