

**Umno piles pressure on MCA chief**  
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Deputy Sabah Umno liaison chief Salleh Said Keruak said today MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek should have refrained from raising the bumiputera equity issue.

Expressing support for the statement by Information Communication and Culture Minister Rais Yatim that it was not proper to raise the issue, Salleh said bumiputera rights had been provided for under the constitution.

He said Article 153 of the Federal Constitution provided a safeguard for the rights and privileges of the Malays and natives of Sabah and Sarawak as well as the legitimate rights of other communities.

Salleh, who is the former Sabah chief minister, said the call for the gradual removal of the 30 percent bumiputera equity, was therefore against the reality and should not have been raised.

"Maybe he made the statement for political mileage but it should not have happened," he said in a statement.

Rais said yesterday that the statement by Chua on the bumiputera equity was against the spirit of the constitution.

"Maybe he did not realise this but I would like to remind that Article 153 is not a simple provision; in fact, it cannot be amended by any parties unless with the consent of the Conference of Rulers and subject to provisions of Article 159 of the Federal Constitution," Rais said.

Salleh, who is Kota Belud Umno chief, also hoped that political leaders would be cautious in making statements which touched on racial sensitivities.

- Bernama

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