

Perkasa chief Ibrahim mocks Umno's stand
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Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali is bemused over the sudden popularity of his Malay rights NGO and made light of Umno's expressed intention to dissociate the party from his group.

Ibrahim, who called a press conference at his home in Hulu Kelang on the second day of Hari Raya Aidilfitri, described the statements made by Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor and Umno minister Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz as "quite hilarious".

ibrahim ali press conference at his home in taman melawati "All of a sudden Perkasa is getting so much attention, (and) more so with Tengku Adnan's and Mohd Nazri's statements," said Ibrahim.

"I'm rather shocked to hear the Umno secretary-general's statement that Umno will not be associated with Perkasa. When did Perkasa ever ask for Umno's support?" he quipped, obviously enjoying the media attention.

"We are a NGO, we have nothing to do with Umno. Just because they won't support us, it doesn't mean we will not have any support at all," he declared.

Earlier this week, the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition said it would distance itself from the right-wing movement because of it could be detrimental to its efforts to win back the confidence of the non-Malays.

Tengku Adnan, speaking on the behalf of the Umno, vowed that the party would shy away from Perkasa after being pressured from BN component parties, which are alarmed by the organisation's racist stand.

"Umno does not have anything to do with Perkasa as alleged by some. The other BN components welcome this (Umno's) stand.

"Being associated with Perkasa will only weigh the party down. This sentiment was shared by all component parties which are worried about the feedback they have been getting from the grassroots," Tengku Adnan had said.

He also vowed that Umno would not allow Ibrahim to contest under its ticket in the next general election.

When I did I apply to contest under Umno?

Ibrahim, who is an independent parliamentarian for Pasir Mas, was once an Umno leader in Kelantan and had stood under PAS flag in the last general election before severing ties with the opposition party.

According to Ibrahim, he had never asked Umno for the right to contest Pasir Mas under the party's banner in the next general election.

"Since when did I ever apply to contest under Umno's ticket at the 13th general election. I don't remember asking them.

Ibrahim Ali press conference at his home in Taman Melawati "He (Tengku Adnan) made this statement clearly to please certain quarters in BN," said Ibrahim.

Ibrahim also claimed that he was being blamed by Umno for the loss of non-Malay support among the BN component parties.

"In that case, I'm happy that I can assist these ailing quarters (referring to BN components).

"If the statement by Tengku Adnan, Mohd Nazri and Khairy Jamaluddin will help BN win in the next general election, I'm happy to be of help.

"I hope BN will achieve its two-thirds parliamentary majority and win most handsomely. Even if they wish for my death to win the election, I'm willing."

Problem lies with MCA-MIC-Gerakan

However, despite making obliging statements on the issue, Ibrahim argued that Perkasa was not the real culprit in BN's loss of non-Malay support.

"These three leaders (MCA's Chua Soi Lek, MIC's S Samy Vellu and Gerakan's Koh Tsu Koon) are strong enough to win the next general election without Perkasa's support," he said sarcastically.

"If Umno keeps its distance from Perkasa, they feel that MCA, MIC and Gerakan will get back the support of the Chinese and Indians because the issues that Perkasa stand for are more serious than pornographic videos that are being distributed on the Internet and leaders who are insisting to stay on despite being unwanted," he said.

Ibrahim was referring to the sex video involving MCA chief Chua and long-serving MIC boss Samy Vellu's refusal to budge from his post that he has held for three decades.

"But I'm not worried because Perkasa's support is strengthening by the day. In one day, I sometimes get over 1,000 SMSes. They are so many that I'm unable to reply all.

"My advice to Perkasa is not take all this seriously and go on with our struggle because Perkasa aims for the unity of the Malays, which will in turn unite our multiracial community. In that process, Malay rights can be strengthened," he said.

"They (Umno) are angry with Perkasa because we are racist... Prove it to me how Perkasa is racist? Have we ever demanded the rights of others to be stripped? We just want to be firm on certain policies which must never be compromised, much like Lee Kuan Yew (former Singapore prime minister). Only then, we can be united."

Political allegiance doesn't matter

Ibrahim also argued that offering a popular political platform is more important than party allegiance.

"Umno claims to have three million members, but how did they lose the 12th general election?

"The trend today is that despite being party members, the people vote in response to the

national issues affecting them.

ibrahim ali press conference at his home in taman melawati"The contributing factors are party unity, good candidates and good electoral machinery but these are only 30 percent. The balance of 70 percent are issues that affect the voters."

Ibrahim gave the example of the increase in the cost of living. He said party members will cast their votes for the person who can help them solve the problem, regardless of which party they are from.

"I wish (Prime Minister) Najib (Abdul Razak's) three lieutenants good luck, and I hope they will make sure BN wins," he said caustically.

Asked whether Perkasa has plans to seek the support of BN or PAS in the next general polls, Ibrahim said:

"At the moment, I'm not thinking about myself. I'm a fighter - sometimes I fight to lose, sometimes I fight to win... I just want to have my voice heard. Only God can dictate my fate," he said.

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