

**Dr M: Suicidal for Umno to part from Perkasa**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**September 12, 2010**

It would be suicidal for Umno to cut ties with Malay rights movement Perkasa as the party needs all the support it can get, said former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking to reporters after hosting the Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house programme at his home in Seri Kembangan today, he asserted that Umno cannot afford to disown the right-wing NGO as it needed every possible vote to win the next general election.

mahathir mohamad hari raya open house 2"I think they (Umno) is ambivalent about this. While some say it should distance (themselves) from Perkasa others say (Umno is) so divided that to do so, would divide it even more.

"The last election, the margins were so small that to lose any more support may mean losing the election," warned Mahathir (left).

Mahathir, who is rather apprehensive over recent statements by several Umno leaders who have unequivocally expressed that the party's continuous association with Perkasa would erode its support base, said he didn't think that they were the official view of the government.

According to him, only a few Umno leaders have expressed their views on the matter, and this did not include party president Najib Razak.

'Najib has yet to state his views'

In a move seen to please BN's multiracial component party members, Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor had recently assured that the party will neither back the controversial movement nor its president Ibrahim Ali.

It is understood that a majority of Umno members are also involved in Perkasa, but in spite of its common struggle to ensure that the constitutional rights of the Malays are met, several cabinet ministers had also supported Tengku Adnan's opinion that prolonging the association with the NGO was not a positive move.

NONE"I feel that Umno is not very strong so we cannot push people away from us. We can't afford to lose even a few. There is no need to be enemies with anyone," cautioned Mahathir.

He also opined that as prime minister and Umno president Najib (left) has yet state his view on Perkasa, he is probably not "totally against" the group.

"He (Najib) has met them. Ibrahim Ali claims 60 percent of the members are from Umno. It is possible because in the last election, Umno members actually voted for PAS.

"When your margin is very small the loss of a few voters may cause you to lose the election," he emphasised.

Ibrahim said yesterday that it did not rattle them if Umno leaders wanted to dissociate their party from the Perkasa.

He pointed out that BN had far more serious issues to deal with than Perkasa, to win back the people's confidence in the ruling coalition.

Voicing Malay community feelings

Mahathir, who is also Perkasa's patron, defended the right-wing movement, saying that they are voicing out the feelings of the Malay community who find that Umno is no longer protecting them.

"During my time, there was no such NGO. Maybe there is now a feeling that Umno is not protecting them so others are taking their place.

mahathir mohamad hari raya open house "Their struggle is based on the constitution and they are a NGO, not a political party and they are not tied to anyone.

"Whether its PAS, DAP or Umno, or even me, they will criticise (if there is something wrong)," said the ex-premier, who ran the country for 22 years.

Perkasa has its role, stressed Mahathir, as today people are questioning the social contract established before independence in 1957.

"They are making statements that we should forget about the social contract... which was made without their participation.

"They want to discard the old understanding... as something entered into by people without involving them and therefore, they are not bound. Then of course, there will be reactions."

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/142481>