

**Gerakan, MCA slam Dr M for backing Perkasa  
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Gerakan Youth today warned of a breakdown in civil society if Umno takes former premier Dr Mahathir Mohammad's advice and embraces Malay rights pressure group Perkasa to consolidate its Malay support base.

NONThe party's national youth deputy chief Oh Tong Keong (right) said Mahathir's comments ignore the wishes of the overwhelming majority of Malaysians, regardless of race or religion, who disagree with an "extremist body like Perkasa".

"Unfortunately, Dr Mahathir's latest statement has sent out a very disturbing message," Oh said in a statement today.

"If Umno has to embrace a racist group like Perkasa for fear of losing 'the Malays' support', as suggested by Dr Mahathir, and other ethnic-based political parties from both sides of the political divide follow suit, then where is Malaysia? How about us Malaysians?"

Oh was commenting on the statement Mahathir, who is also Perkasa's patron, made at his Hari Raya open house yesterday.

NONThe former PM had told reporters that Umno cannot afford to alienate Perkasa for fear that the party would lose crucial votes in the next general election.

Mahathir (left) was reacting to a recent declaration by Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor that the party was distancing itself from the right-wing group as their association has eroded non-Malay support for the BN coalition.

Oh stressed that if Umno "embraces" Perkasa, it will constitute a snub to all its BN partners and undermine the spirit of goodwill, friendship and mutual respect and understanding shared by all Malaysians.

"We hope the spirit will not be destroyed by some selfish groups which have their own political agenda or ulterior motive," he said.

'BN not just Umno'

The MCA meanwhile expressed "regret" over Mahathir's endorsement of Perkasa as a means of propping up Malay support for the BN.

mca post cc meeting pc 130810 kong chor haReferring to the former premier only as a "prominent public figure", MCA secretary-general Kong Cho Ha (left) said that the coalition cannot win public support by associating with "extremist or xenophobic groups".

"BN does not consist of only one political party, but is an alliance which comprises various political parties representing all ethnic groups in Malaysia.

"... BN thrives on the support rendered by every race, not only from the Malays. Any form of linkage with extremist or xenophobic groups will incur a loss in vote counts against BN," he said in a statement.

Kong pledged that the BN will ensure that the future of Malaysia "will not be sacrificed through the regressive and flawed racial outlook of Perkasa".

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