

**Khairy: Relying on the Malay vote alone will lose us seats**  
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Relying solely on the Malay vote will lose Umno and BN seats in the elections - that is the reality, said Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin.

This was demonstrated in the last polls in which Umno almost lost due to the loss of support by non-Malays, he told the wing's annual general assembly in Kuala Lumpur this morning.

"If we hope to rely on the Malay vote alone, we should be mindful that there are only 73 parliamentary seats with a dominant Malay majority of 70 percent and above. Such is the reality.

"We must learn from the results of the last general elections, where we almost relinquished power due to the loss of support from non-Malays.

"If we still subscribe to the illusion that we can win without their support, then 50 seats currently held by BN are in grave danger.

"If there is no concerted effort to practise an inclusive and moderate leadership, Umno's Malay leadership will disappear come the next election," he added.

Khairy also said that Umno Youth should stop dreaming of uniting all Malays within the party, as no Malay-based political party can claim to have the support of all Malays to vote the same way in the elections.

"There is no Malay party - be it Umno or PAS - that can secure a hundred percent of Malay votes. In many areas, the Malay political split is such that 50 percent are on one side and 50 percent on the other.

"This means that any side wanting to win, must win with the support of all Malaysians, regardless of race and religion," he said.

In the 2008 general elections, BN lost two-thirds majority for the first time since 1969, with five states falling to the hands of the Pakatan state government.

Many of the BN candidates lost, with many attributing it to the loss of non-Malay support among the electorates.

Empathise with the non-Malays

Khairy, speaking in his second year as the movement's chief to the 795 delegates gathered at the Putra World Trade Centre, also urged Umno Youth member to empathise with the grievances of their non-Malay fellow countrymen.

"Are we in any way less Malay if our struggle cuts across race and religion, without sacrificing basic principles of our cause? Are we heretics for condemning attacks perpetrated by certain parties on people of other faiths?

"Are we traitors for disagreeing when non-bumiputeras are labeled as settlers and squatters? The answer is a resolute no!" he said.

"In the midst of us calling for Malays to be big-hearted and embrace the politics of moderation, the sensitivities of the bumiputeras must also be recognized and respected.

"... When they are referred to as *pendatang* or told to return to China or India - what of their feelings?

"This, too, is their country. This is their country of birth; in fact that of their parents and grandparents. What of the feelings of the poor non-Malay student denied government scholarship despite achieving outstanding results?" he said to muted response.

Calling for more understanding between the races, he said that prejudices and barriers will only foster when people fail to appreciate the feelings of other races.

"Young Malaysians live within the confines of their own ethnic communities. The young Malay who attends religious school, a Middle Eastern university and watches Malay programs on Astro Ria is alien to the young Chinese attending a vernacular school, a Taiwanese university and entertained by (cable television channel) 'Wah Lai Toi'.

"Each perpetuates mutual prejudices because of these barriers that exist," he said.

'Wanting NEP reviewed is not treachery'

While defending the New Economic Policy which took effect in 1970, Khairy also said it was time to take a step backwards and face objectively the reality that the implementation of the affirmative action policy had shortcomings, leakages and loopholes.

"During that (rapid economic growth in the 90's), we saw many Malay millionaires given great opportunities and brought to the fore through privatisation programs and ownership of shares via 'pink forms'.

"Unfortunately, the shares allocated to Bumiputeras to increase the community's equity position were sold because some wanted a quick buck, the luxurious bungalow, the Mercedes, the young wife more becoming of their newfound status.

"With the sudden riches that fell on their lap, they could not remain grounded," he said.

"This reality demands that we make changes. We must be clear that the New Economic Model does not sideline the Malay agenda. What it does is update the implementation methods to overcome the weaknesses of the NEP.

"Why should we be afraid of an economic agenda based on merit? Why should we be concerned when those who have the capabilities, who are genuine, are given the opportunity to move forward?" he asked.

"Let it not be that simply wanting to reexamine an approach of the agenda for Malays invites the charge of being a traitor," he said.

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