

The opposition, Indians and Ijok
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In reference to the malaysiakini report Field Indian candidate for Ijok, PKR, Prim's P Uthyakumar has raised some interesting things about the coming by-election in Ijok.

Since the BN will be fielding an Indian candidate from the MIC, Uthyakumar thinks that the opposition PKR should also field an Indian candidate and he suggested an Indian name from PKR.

If PKR is truly a multi-racial party, it would be difficult to impose this condition on the party as the selection process will be determined by broader interests and concerns.

However, if PKR still operates partially on the basis of racial sentiments (as witnessed in the case of Lunas by-election some years back) then it would be difficult for the PKR leaders to defend their claimed multi-racialism.

I am not suggesting that Uthyakumar is right or wrong, but what is important is for the opposition parties to examine what he has raised. Well, if the Indian community thinks that it has no place in the opposition, chances are that Indians in Ijok will go for the BN candidate.

The opposition winning the Ijok by-election is important but what guarantee is there that a non-Indian candidate stands a better chance of winning? Or alternatively, if the opposition can field an Indian candidate, there are no grounds to suggest that he might lose.

Ultimately, the opposition in Malaysia has to get around the ethnic factor in a more serious way rather than simply suggesting that it stands for multi-racialism.

However, if multi-racialism seems to be marginalising Indians repeatedly, then the so-called multi-racialism practised by the opposition remains empty rhetoric.

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