

Prim says BN fairer, slams Anwar
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Barisan Nasional (BN) is definitely more multi-racial than opposition parties, said Parti Reformasi Insan Malaysia (Prim) today.

In a statement today, its pro-tem secretary-general P Uthayakumar also took a swipe at Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) advisor Anwar Ibrahim for 'not practicing what he preaches'.

Prim is upset with PKR's decision to field its treasurer Khalid Ibrahim in the upcoming Ijok by-election in Selangor despite calls for an Indian candidate.

Although PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail ruled out race as a determining factor, Uthayakumar remains unconvinced.

According to him, Khalid (right) was picked simply because the majority of voters in Ijok are Malays. He will be facing BN's MIC candidate K Parthiban in the April 28 contest.

Uthayakumar pointed out that the Umno-led BN has been fairer in terms of seat allocation for MIC candidates as seen in the 1999 general election, 2000 Lunas by-election, 2000 Teluk Kemang by-election and 2004 general election.

"Umno, a Malay-only party, reserved 10 parliamentary and 20 state seats for Indians in MIC and BN. These were safe Malay-majority seats as there is not a single seat with an Indian majority.

"Umno also sees to it that the Indian candidates win. It should be noted that MIC candidates are the only ones in BN who can claim 100 percent victory in the 2004 general elections.

"We cannot help but envy the enthusiasm and solidarity Umno leaders display for the Indian candidate in Ijok. The photographs and media reports speak for themselves," he added.

Anwar blamed

Uthayakumar pinned the blame on Anwar for the marginalisation of capable Indian candidates in PKR.

"The last straw was when Anwar took this racial politics stand when he vehemently preaches otherwise," he said.

"With him at the helm, capable and credible grassroots PKR Indian leaders were unfairly bypassed and marginalised by reason of their ethnicity in favour of a Malay candidate," he added.

Uthayakumar, a former PKR member himself, said Prim has lost confidence in the three main opposition parties (PKR, PAS and DAP) and is left with no alternative but to boycott the Ijok by-election.

However, he said Prim will launch a campaign to register Indian voters and distribute some one million VCDs on Hindu temple demolitions, custodial deaths, police brutality, Tamil

education, poverty and other issues affecting the Indian community.

"This way, we hope to reduce the BN majority and send a strong message on these issues. At the same time, the opposition candidate should not win. It is hoped that it will be a win-win formula for the Indian community," he added.

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