

'Umno must not be allowed to hijack Article 153'
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DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng warned Umno not to hijack Article 153 of the Malaysian Constitution to split Malaysians along racial lines.

"Umno always cites Article 153 of the Federal Constitution on the special position of the Malays as justification for their racist Malays-only approach.

NONE"However Umno invariably fails to mention that Article 153 also says that the legitimate interest of other communities must also be protected," said Guan Eng who is also Penang chief minister.

Article 153 states: It shall be the responsibility of the Yang di Pertuan Agong to safeguard the special position of the Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak and the legitimate interests of other communities in accordance with the provisions of this article.

"In other words, the Malaysian Constitution is about Malaysians first and not Malaysians second," Guan Eng said in his speech at the Perak DAP convention in Ipoh this morning.

He said "Umno's racist mindset of putting race before nation is the reason why BN leaders including Defence Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and other civil servants can speak boldly in racist tones to offend fellow Malaysians."

Ahmad is alleged to have said that the low percentage of non-Malays in the armed forces showed a lack of patriotism which brought a political uproar by both BN and Pakatan leaders.

However DAP fights for the aspirations of all Malaysians regardless of race and religion said Guan Eng.

"We reject the discriminatory politics of Umno that insists that they are Malays first and Malaysians second.

We also condemn Umno and their allies for treating as traitors and enemies of Malays those who disagree with their racist ideology of Malays first and Malaysians second," he stressed.

He said that BN has allegedly termed DAP as anti-Malay, anti-Islam, anti-Malay rulers and anti-Bahasa Malaysia which is BN political propaganda to tarnish the name of the party.

Special position safeguarded

Guan Eng said DAP safeguards the special position of Malays and Malaysians as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

He warned Umno to control the racist attitude of its party newspaper Utusan Malaysia as it is hurting the feelings of Malaysians with its racist reporting.

The controversial newspaper recently called the bloody tragedy of May 13 1969, where many innocent Malaysians lost their lives, as a sacred day.

"How low has Umno stooped that it can even celebrate the murder of innocent men and women and children?" he asked.

"Yet no action has taken against Utusan," continued the DAP leader.

Intelligent cities

The Penang chief minister also claimed that by 2050, 70 percent of the world population is expected to live in city communities and as such the government must build intelligent cities with integrity.

He said Malaysia must reverse the brain drain that has driven away two million talented Malaysians overseas since 1960.

He also pointed out more Malays are also leaving the country for greener pastures.

He warned that Malaysia is losing its economic clot in the region as according to Bloomberg over the week reported that by the end of this year, Singapore would probably overtake Malaysia as South-East Asia's third largest economy, after Indonesia and Thailand.

"We have failed to grow the economy of the country and have lost out in the race towards economic competitiveness," he said.

"Singapore's GDP per capita was US\$36,537 (up from US\$512 in 1965) compared with Malaysia's US\$6,975 (US\$335 in 1965). Can we ever catch up?" he asked.

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