

Anwar says again: No qualms with Lim as DPM
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PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim has stood by his earlier statement that a non-Malay, such as DAP advisor Lim Kit Siang, can be appointed the deputy prime minister if Pakatan Rakyat wins the next general election.

sibu by election lim kit siangHe said that if there was a consensus among Pakatan leaders for Lim (left), a veteran opposition leader, to helm the post it would not pose a problem to him.

"It would be a decision by the Pakatan leadership. What I do not agree with how this issue is being reported by the Umno-controlled media, who is painting me as if I'm pro-Chinese.

"I want to ask: Why do we deny any citizen who has the ability and capability, including Lim, just because he is a Chinese?"

"I cannot accept that. Also, who says we are sidelining PAS? There is an agreement between us. Maybe (the deputy prime minister) can be from PAS or Sabah and Sarawak. It is up to the situation," he added.

He said this during a press conference in Penang, in response to questions about PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat's claims that Lim, or any non-Malay, can be appointed deputy prime minister if he was a devout Muslim.

Anwar said that he respected Nik Abdul Aziz's personal opinion and contrasted with the "overt-covert and open-subtle" racial lines taken by Umno-controlled news organisations.

"They are a bunch of hypocrites... They talk about 1Malaysia, then criticise any possibilities of a Chinese being elevated to a more respectable position.

"Where is the 1Malaysia concept? You talk about 1Malaysia, via Ketuanan Melayu, that if we put a Chinese DPM, whether as DPM I, II or III, it is an affront to the Malay supremacy concept," he said.

'Umno creating a monster'

He lamented that Umno-controlled media organisations were obsessed with criticising Pakatan over racial issues when it should be examining the coalition's policies.

pkrcongress 271110 anwarAnwar (right) said that most of the problem lies with the Malay news organisations, pointing out that its reports on Pakatan were vastly different from its Chinese counterparts.

"How long do we want to practise this racist politics? Why is there a subtle attempt to preach hatred against Lim? If you don't agree with him, say so, we have the right to disagree.

"Why portray him as a Chinese racist or chauvinist? And therefore the Malays should fear him? That I resent as a matter of principle... I am a Malay you know and I know the risk I am taking... Many people say: Anwar, you are taking unnecessary risks.

"Did he ask to change the constitution? No. Did he ask the position of Islam to be changed? No. But Umno and (Prime Minister) Najib Abdul Razak said yes. They create this monster," he further said.

He adds that Umno was gravely mistaken if it thought that the next general election can be won by taking a racial supremacy tone with the Malays and a 1Malaysia concept for the non-Malays.

"If they continue with this line, I think they are far behind and have lost their ground. The rakyat is more mature now, for example, in Penang, I have confidence that it is not just the Chinese but Malays as well (who are more mature)," he said.

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