

'I voiced it, but I don't support it'
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Gerakan Wanita chief Tan Lian Hoe landed in the spotlight after the media reported that she had urged her party to leave the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition because of Umno's racial politics.
MCPX

One day later, the politician explained that she was merely voicing out the concerns of the grassroots but did not support the call made by the Perak Gerakan delegates during a conference on Sunday.

gerakan youth agm 2007 051007 tan lian hoeAt a press conference yesterday, Tan said she was misquoted, claiming that the contentious statement was made by the Perak delegates and not the Wanita wing.

"However, as leaders of a democratic party, we could not stop them from voicing out their grievances concerning the events happening in the country of late," she was quoted as saying by Bernama.

"Nevertheless certain incidents in regard to race and religion have caused uneasiness to some and we have to listen to our grassroots," added Tan, who is also Perak Gerakan Wanita chief.

She was clarifying news reports that about 80 percent of the delegates who attended the Perak Gerakan's delegates conference wanted the matter to be debated at the party's upcoming national delegates' conference in October.

PM accepts explanation

Tan, who is also deputy information minister, said she had met and explained the issue to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Information Minister Ahmad Shabery Cheek during a meeting in Parliament yesterday morning.

"There was no pressure whatsoever for me to make the explanation to them," she said, adding that the prime minister had accepted her explanation that it was a case of miscommunication.

"He also told me that he had been informed by several leaders of the component parties of the same issues and that he will take note of the things voiced out," she said.

Tan also said the concerns of Perak's delegates would be brought up to the attention of the party's national leadership during its Central Working Committee (CWC) and Central Committee (CC) meetings.

She also refuted claims that the outbursts from delegates were due to the dissatisfaction of the grassroots in the party's leadership and fanned by the claims of PKR leader Anwar Ibrahim that the Pakatan Rakyat would form a new government on Sept 16.

She reiterated Gerakan MPs loyalty to the BN and said that they would never jump ship.

Previously, it was reported that Gerakan Perak chief and party vice-president Chan Ko Youn also concurred with the 'pull out' agenda and urged the Perak delegates to raise the issue during the national meeting.

However, Gerakan acting president Dr Koh Tsu Koon swiftly dismissed the possibility of the party breaking ties with BN.

Opposition leaders were also quick to comment on the issue with Anwar calling the 'pull out' proposal 'wise' and DAP's Lim Guan Eng urging BN to review its policies or risk losing Gerakan.

Since the March 8 polls, the once mighty Gerakan has been reduced to tatters.

Among others, the party lost control of Penang while its acting president and top leaders were also shown the exit by voters.

Yesterday, Gerakan was dealt another blow with veteran Dr Toh Kin Woon deciding to throw in the towel.

The party central committee member had tendered his resignation barely 24 hours after expressing support for Anwar in the upcoming Permatang Pauh by-election.

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