

**Reject racist leaders, says Ku Li**  
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**Humayun Kabir**

Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah says only the people have the power to end racial politics in the country by rejecting leaders who harp on racial sentiment for their own political survival.

The veteran Umno leader added that Malaysian politics is deeply rooted in the ethnic policy started by the British to divide and rule and was continued by the three major racial parties of Umno, MCA and MIC after Malaya had achieved its independence from the British.

"Racial politics started when we formed the alliance of segregated parties of Umno, MCA and MIC."

He said that the mindset of Malaysians is still based on racial lines although superficially lip-service is given to unity of the various races to think as Malaysians.

"As such politicians are too afraid to be seen as compromising on racial issues as they fear the whiplash from their community will end their political carriers," said Razaleigh (*right*).

Malaysia is politically only 52 years old and the March 8 general elections last year has changed the political thinking of voters which should continue if the concept of Malaysian Malaysia is to be realised, he argued.

It took United States nearly 200 years to evolve from their racist stand of colour discrimination into the democracy that they are preaching to the world now, he pointed out.

Razaleigh was answering questions from the floor after giving a talk entitled 'Malaysia: The challenge of the Present' organised by the Perak Academy at a hotel in Ipoh last night.

**Why 1Malaysia?**

Answering a question as to why the government is harping on unity 1Malaysia concept when the vernacular schools are still present in the country which contradicts the unity call.

"This is considered a very sensitive question among Malaysians and as such politicians are hesitating to call for an end to such schools but if the public's will supports such a call than the unity call can materialise," he said.

To another question as to why Malaysia is lagging behind in development status when Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea have achieved this mission.

"Corruption and wastage of funds are the main reasons why Malaysia is lagging behind the other countries.

"Our development will backfire unless the government arrests this growing menace," he replied.

He was also asked why there was still racial parties in the country which is a drawback for uniting all Malaysians and why Umno cannot be renamed United Malaysian National Organisation to unite all the races under one political banner.

Razaleigh replied that "racial politics started even when we campaigned for independence when the three main races of Malays, Chinese and Indians chose to form their own race

parties of Umno, MCA and MIC."

"Although an Umno political leader Onn Jaffar tried to form a multi-racial party of the three races, it backfired because the people were not ready yet and it will take more time to materialise this dream as the mindsets of Malaysians have to be changed for the better," he said.

### **'May win the battle but lose the war'**

"Even DAP and PAS are not multiracial parties although they claim they are, as only a few Malays, Indians and Chinese are sprinkled among the two parties. DAP is Chinese while PAS is Malay based."

When asked about his political carrier, he said he will continue to remain in Umno and fight for the changes in within a Malaysian outlook.

To a question whether certain articles in the Federal Constitution can be changed to meet the modern needs, he said, "It can be done if the majority of the people wish for but such demand for changes will start backfiring and a trend will be set when all will start to ask for changes according to their whims and fancies."

"When the Federal Constitution was being prepared, all parties were asked to suggest their recommendations but PAS refused to participate and now they demand that the Federal Constitution being amended to reflect an Islamic state," he pointed out.

Later, after the function had ended, Razaleigh asked about the nomination of Mohd Isa Samad as the BN candidate for the Bagan Pinang by-election in Negeri Sembilan.

"They (BN) may win the battle (in Bagan Pinang) but they will lose the war (during the 13th general election) later on," he replied.

"People now are very concerned about the moral values of leaders today and the long-term interest of the country is more important than anything else.

"However, Umno is not prepared to change for the better and eliminate the corrupted and tainted members," he said.

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