

Muhyiddin: I'm Malay first
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S Pathmawathy

"I am Malay first, but being Malay doesn't mean I am not Malaysian," said Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.

He was responding to DAP leader Lim Kit Siang's challenge earlier today for him to state whether he is a Malay or a Malaysian first.

muhyiddin yassin pc 170310"He doesn't understand (what) the meaning of the concept of 1Malaysia is all about," Muhyiddin told a press conference in the Parliament lobby this afternoon.

"How can I say I'm Malaysian first and Malay second? All the Malays will shun me... and it's not proper," he said.

The DAP veteran leader had earlier today posed three questions to Muhyiddin as "acid tests" to ascertain whether the deputy premier really backs Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's 1Malaysia.

1. Would Muhyiddin agree to the establishment of an opposition-headed Parliamentary Select Committee on '1Malaysia'?
2. Is Muhyiddin prepared to declare that the basis of '1Malaysia' is "ketuanan rakyat Malaysia" (people's supremacy) and not "ketuanan Melayu" (Malay supremacy)?
3. Is he (Muhyiddin) prepared to endorse the objective of 1Malaysia as defined by the 1Malaysia Government Transformation Programme (GTP) Roadmap to create a nation where every Malaysian perceives himself or herself as Malaysian first, and by race, religion or region second?

Trying to 'stir us up'

Lim also suggested that Muhyiddin step down if he considered himself first as a Malay rather than a Malaysian.

NONEIn response to the challenge, Muhyiddin said Lim (right) is in no position to impose a "benchmark" on his (Muhyiddin) commitment to 1Malaysia.

Muhyiddin also accused Lim of trying to "drive a wedge" between him and Najib.

"We will not fall for it or be diverted (by the issue). He is looking for reasons to stir us up," he said.

"I explained in Parliament (earlier that) a leader, even the best, when he talks about his race, it doesn't mean that he doesn't support '1Malaysia'," he implored.

Muhyiddin also argued that 1Malaysia is centred on the constitution and the Rukunegara and, therefore, "there is nothing wrong for leaders to fight for the needs of their race".

"Don't tell me that Kit Siang is going to say that he not going to defend Chinese rights," he

said.

'Middle Malaysia'

Adopting such a stand, furthermore, does not imply he supports '1Malaysia' any less, said Muhyiddin.

"It does not mean that when we help the Malays, we won't help the Chinese," he said.

Muhyiddin also took a swipe at DAP's 'Middle Malaysia', saying the concept was not shared by its opposition coalition partners.

'Middle Malaysia' is only supported by DAP, not Pakatan Rakyat (as a whole), whereas in the BN, there are 13 (other) component parties who unanimously support '1Malaysia'.

"I challenge Kit Siang to prove that PKR and PAS also support Middle Malaysia.

"Their party is chauvinistic. Our party (is a) national party," said Muhyiddin.

He also claimed that 1Malaysia's appeal is the reason behind DAP's "fear" of it.

"I can say I'm a Malaysian first but (would it be sincere)?" he asked.

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