

**Ibrahim Ali and Perkasa - down but not out yet**  
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COMMENT Once riding high, Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali is now fumbling for support. Hence, the nonstop and rather nonsensical tirade against those Umno and BN leaders who have given him and his ultra-Malay rights group the boot.

So far, only former Umno president and Perkasa patron Mahathir Mohamad has spoken up for Perkasa. Mahathir has even warned Umno it might suffer further loss of popularity with the Malay voters if it cut its ties with Perkasa.

But Mahathir himself is a spent force, done in by his own racism and the slew of revelations that are starting to pour in about his corruption in the various mega and privatization deals hammered out during his 22 years in power.

Nonetheless, not all is lost yet for Ibrahim Ali and Perkasa. There is still Prime Minister Najib Razak.

Despite the noisy break-up announced by Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan and cheered by Cabinet ministers such as Nazri Aziz, Koh Tsu Koon, and MCA leaders, Najib himself has kept mum.

But very telling is that the Umno-owned Utusan newspaper has supported Perkasa, even though its top editors were hand-picked by Najib.

"Yes, it is the typical two-faced politics of Umno. Some say Najib is being cautious. I think that is too kind a word. It is not caution, it is outright unprincipled, two-timing misrepresentation. If the Malay response is resounding they want Perkasa, Najib will be first to turn around, no doubt helped by Utusan," Bukit Gantang MP Nizar Jamaluddin told *Malaysia Chronicle*.

"In such a case, the ones who will look like the real fools will be Tsu Koon and Soi Lek and the other non-Malay BN leaders for getting all excited over what is nothing more than another big bluff. Fortunately for them, there hasn't been much response. Few Malays care about Ibrahim Ali and his nonsense but it is not just Perkasa that has faded but also Umno."

Keeping a conspicuously low-profile is Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, who has avoided a direct comment on Perkasa, saying that the "bigger picture" was more important.

"While we need to work for our community, we also need to respect the interest of other communities so that resentment and the feeling of lack of respect will not arise," *Bernamea* reported Muhyiddin as saying.

Since becoming the deputy premier, Muhyiddin has aligned himself to Mahathir rather than Najib. He has publicly criticized the PM's multi-racial 1Malaysia plan, earning himself a reputation for being a racist with his infamous "I'm Malay first" comments.

"Muhyiddin is also groping in the dark but it may be too late for him. He was silly to align himself so directly with Mahathir. You see, Mahathir can get away with all the racist comments because he is retired but Muhyiddin is not," Gopeng MP Lee Boon Chye told

*Malaysia Chronicle.*

"How can you be DPM of the entire country when you only consider the interests of the Malays to the point that you openly admit you put their interests first and foremost? How can the other races trust him for fair play and justice - he won't bother. That is the message he has given."

Meanwhile, in a sign that the "sympathy" response from the Malays has not been as much as what he had hoped to elicit, Ibrahim Ali has himself changed tack.

He now wants a new political pact and has invited non-Malays to team up with Perkasa. At the same, he insists Perkasa will not enter politics.

"I have made the decision, I will co-operate with candidates who understand our stand including non-Malay candidates. I don't care about race - only those who understand the Federal Constitution, who is of good character, has integrity, fluent in Bahasa Malaysia and ready to face the 13th general election," *Malaysian Insider* reported Ibrahim as saying.

Pakatan Rakyat leaders ridiculed his inconsistency.

"He is talking nonsense. Perkasa has from day one been a political weapon for Umno, so how can it not be interested in politics? When Umno needs its services later on, Perkasa will suddenly be rehabilitated. Until then - to stay alive - Ibrahim Ali needs publicity. It will be one silly stunt after another," predicted Nizar. - *Malaysia Chronicle*

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