

**Umno-Perkasa reconciliation: All eyes on MCA, MIC, Gerakan
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As expected, Umno and Perkasa have reconciled, setting the stage for even more intense racial politicking and social disintegration. It also places a huge question mark on the future of MCA, Gerakan and MIC and their ability to protect and speak up for their communities.

For not only is the Umno-Perkasa patch-up a resounding victory for the conservatives in Umno led by former premier Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister Najib Razak's multi-racial 1Malaysia plan has also been scuttled. Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan now says 1Malaysia is not about racial equality.

"The Umno-Perkasa reconciliation is very significant. In the past Umno denied links to Perkasa. But because no one believed it, it was forced to publicly reject Perkasa. Now it has publicly made up with Perkasa. What does this mean for Malaysians," Beruas MP geh Koo Ham told *Malaysia Chronicle*.

"It means that, for whatever his reasons, Najib is still unwilling to discard *ketuanan Melayu*. Yet we have Soi Lek insisting that Umno has never believed in Malay supremacy. This is now proven to be a bare-faced lie. Not only has Soi Lek failed to represent the views of the Chinese community, he has even lied to them for the sake of helping Umno to retain power and this is totally unacceptable. It is time for them to take stock of themselves and what is happening to Malaysia."

A big let down for the BN components

Apart from Chua Soi Lek, the MCA president, Gerakan chief Koh Tsu Koon and MIC head S Samy Vellu have also been ridiculed and condemned for their part in the Najib-Umno 'sandiwara'. MCA, Gerakan and MIC had rushed to cheer-lead the announcement by Tengku Adnan that Umno would reject Perkasa and its president Ibrahim Ali. This would be the start of a new Malaysian era, they had proclaimed.

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Soi Lek

"As a secretary-general I can tell you, we have nothing to do with Perkasa, and certain things Perkasa is doing we are not happy with because they are eroding our support. When they talk about my Chinese friends or my Indian friends, they make us lose more votes," Tengku Adnan had said on September 8.

But sadly, Najib and now Tengku Adnan has let them down - without apology or explanation. On Sunday, the Umno sec-gen was forced to deny his words after Najib himself made a sharp U-turn two days ago. Now, not only has the PM's prized 1Malaysia plan fizzled out, but it appears his New Economic Model due to be fleshed out next month will also not contain any significant reforms. This ultimately means that endemic high-level government corruption will continue to remain a staple of Malaysian life.

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Tsu Koon

"I didn't even ask members of Umno to relinquish their relationship with Perkasa. It was totally blown out of proportion by Ibrahim Ali. When we had a meeting with BN secretaries-

general, we never talked even a little bit that we wanted to distance ourselves from anybody. Our policy is to be close with everybody. We should even go and approach opposition members and explain what our policies are because they are misguided," backtracked Tengku Adnan on Sunday.

All eyes are now on how MCA, MIC and Gerakan will respond. Will they insist on a clear-cut explanation from Najib or will they help him to excuse away his latest failure?

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Samy Vellu

"Once and for all, MCA, Gerakan and MIC should confront the reality. They don't need the opposition to tell them, the 2008 election is already enough. But these guys wanted the glory and cushy Cabinet posts. For that they sold out the communities they represent. If they have any decency, they would make a final stand. But I am sure they won't because they have become like Umno - the money and goodies outweigh social conscience and responsibility," PKR vice president Lee Boon Chye told *Malaysia Chronicle*.

Leaders from MCA, MIC and MIC have gone record, praising Tengku Adnan and Umno for the bold move to break off from racial and religious agitation practiced by Perkasa and Mahathir. When Mahathir warned Umno it would be suicidal to dismiss Perkasa, the BN components even condemned him for advising his party to regress. Malaysia Chronicle appends below their quotes sourced from various mainstream media.

MCA

"In my association or the MCA's association with Umno, I have never heard of any Umno leader who says that the Malays are more superior than the non-Malays. No," said MCA president Chua Soi Lek, when asked by reporters if Singapore's Lee Kuan was correct in saying Malaysia subscribed to racial policies that favored the Malays

"MCA welcomes the comments by various UMNO leaders in distancing themselves from the racist espousals of Perkasa led by its chairman Dato' Ibrahim Ali by acknowledging that such association with Perkasa would lead to UMNO's erosion of support," MCA sec-gen Kong Cho Ha said in a statement.

"Meanwhile, we regret to read the remarks by a prominent public figure who claims that UMNO needs backing from Perkasa if it does not want to risk Barisan Nasional losing support. BN does not consist of only one political party, but is an alliance which comprises various political parties representing all the ethnic groups in Malaysia. Hence, BN thrives on the support rendered by every race, not only from the Malays."

Gerakan

"The statement also reflects the liberal and moderate stand of Barisan Nasional component parties towards all races," Bernama reported Gerakan president Koh Tsu Koon as saying when asked to comment on Tengku Adnan's remarks that Umno would distance itself from Perkasa.

"Unfortunately, Dr Mahathir's latest statement has sent out a very disturbing message," Gerakan Youth deputy chief Oh Tong Keong Oh said in a statement when Mahathir urged Umno not to break away from Perkasa.

"If Umno has to embrace a racist group like Perkasa for fear of losing 'the Malays' support', as suggested by Dr Mahathir, and other ethnic-based political parties from both sides of the political divide follow suit, then where is Malaysia? How about us Malaysians?"

MIC

"It is not the right thing to do to practise racism as it can affect the country's stability," said MIC vice-president Datuk M. Saravanan, referring to Perkasa and the reason behind Umno wishing to distance itself from Perkasa..

"Perkasa is not saying the right things. Non-Malays have never begrudged the position of Malays as enshrined in the Constitution. They have to rethink their actions," said former MIC deputy president Datuk S Subramaniam.

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