

Statement 'A Reflection Of Reality And Rule Of The Numbers Game In Politics'
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KUALA LUMPUR -- The prime minister's statement on the possibility of the government losing Chinese representatives, should Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties fail to garner Chinese votes in the next general election, should not be perceived as a threat to the community.

Rather, Gerakan president Dr Koh Tsu Koon said, the statement should be seen as "a reflection of reality and the rule of the numbers game in politics".

"A smaller number of elected representatives is normally translated as a weakened representation in government, at least in perception," he said in a statement here on Sunday.

Koh, who is also minister in the Prime Minister's Department, was commenting on Najib Tun Razak's statement yesterday that the Chinese community must decide whether to vote for BN component parties or lose representation in the government.

Najib's message was in response to MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek's statement on Friday, that the party would not accept any post in the federal and state governments, in the event it fared worse in the coming general election than it did in the 2008 polls.

Elaborating, Koh urged all BN component parties to work together to become "increasingly Malaysian in perspective and real representation so that, in the near future, voters will soon come to identify BN as a single party representing all Malaysians, irrespective of race," he said.

"Let us turn the aspirations of our prime minister and BN chairman for 1Malaysia into a reality," he added.

In this context, Koh said, he would caution a solely ethnic perspective in analysing Malaysia's political scenario.

In most countries, he said, urban voters, being more educated and exposed, were inclined to be more concerned and critical about issues of good governance, integrity, human rights, civil liberty and justice, other than income and infrastructure.

"These issues, especially integrity, overwhelmed the Chinese community's general recognition of (Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud) Taib's relatively liberal and open practices on culture, religion and education in Sarawak, where race and religion have not been key factors in politics, until recently," added the Gerakan president.

Koh said, even if looking from voting trends from an ethnic angle, it must not be forgotten that some 30 per cent of Chinese voters in Sarawak supported BN and the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP).

"We have the responsibility to represent them in government. In fact, after every general election, the party given the mandate should serve all, irrespective of racial and religious background, and how they voted," he said when commenting on the loss of BN seats in the urban areas in the recent Sarawak state election.

(Bernama)

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