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'DR M DESPERATE FOR CHINESE SUPPORT'

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Mahathir had called Kit Siang a racist in 2013, says Salleh

ARFA YUNUS
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

In a desperate attempt to win the support of Chinese voters in the upcoming 14th General Election, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has made another U-turn by working with DAP, said a minister yesterday.

Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak said Dr Mahathir's support for DAP meant that the former prime minister realised that he could not win without the support of the Chinese.

"It is most ironic that last night in his speech in Gelang Patah, Dr Mahathir did a complete U-turn from his May 2013 stance.

"In 2013, Dr Mahathir called (DAP adviser) Lim Kit Siang a racist and asked that he be 'buried' in Gelang Patah," Salleh wrote in his blog yesterday.

Dr Mahathir is the chairman of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia,

which recently joined DAP, PKR and Parti Amanah Negara in the Pakatan Harapan opposition pact.

Salleh, who is also an Umno Supreme Council member, said Dr Mahathir had, for more than 44 years, slammed DAP and its Chinese supporters.

According to Salleh, Dr Mahathir had, in 1969, said he did not need Chinese voters to win the election as he could win with the support of Malay voters alone.

"After the 2013 general election, Dr Mahathir attacked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak for 'wasting time' on Chinese voters, who would never vote for Barisan Nasional anyway.

"He had asked Najib to instead focus on the Malay voters who are the backbone of Umno."

However, during a *ceramah* in Gelang Patah on Friday, Dr Mahathir said DAP was not a "chau-

vinist" party as he had previously claimed.

He said DAP was a multiracial party that was open to all races.

He had also claimed that DAP was "much more Malaysian" than other parties, which was why he felt comfortable working with his once arch nemesis Lim, who is Gelang Patah member of parliament.

Following the remarks, Salleh questioned Dr Mahathir's "sudden and drastic" U-turn "after more than 44 years of hating DAP."

"We can only assume that in his desperation, Mahathir is scraping the bottom of the barrel because he realises that unless his party and Pakatan Harapan can get Chinese support, they are going to get wiped out in the next

general election because they have already lost the support of the Malay electorates," Salleh added.



Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad