

**No need for Race Relations Act if people behave, says Ibrahim Ali**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**December 27, 2011**  
**By Yow Hong Chieh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 27 — Putrajaya need not table a Race Relations Act to govern interaction between the communities and curb racial extremism if “everyone behaves”, Datuk Ibrahim Ali said today.

“If everyone behaves, if nobody touches on (Article) 153, nobody questions this and that, condemns this and that, and at the same time recognises the disparity of wealth between Malays and non-Malays, I don’t think we need any additional Act.

“We’ve lived harmoniously for the last 54 years. We faced a problem once during May 13 but after that, nothing has happened. So the system has worked well,” the Perkasa chief told reporters here.

The Malay rights leader blamed the rise in racial tension on the opposition’s big gains in Election 2008, saying politicians were now capitalising on racial issues for political mileage.

He also denied that the general election, which saw Pakatan Rakyat (PR) sweep into power in four states, amounted to a referendum on Barisan Nasional’s (BN) “well-received” policies.

“I still believe the people rejected Barisan Nasional in 2008 because of the weakness of (Tun) Abdullahj Badawi as a prime minister. Nothing to do with policies,” the Pasir Mas MP said.

But Ibrahim (picture) said he would wait to see the draft of the Race Relations Act that will be tabled in Parliament in March before he decides if he will support it.

“We will see the draft of the Act. If it is good for the country, we have no problem supporting it,” he said.

“But whatever Act is introduced... it must not encroach upon (Article) 153, Islam as the official religion of the Federation, Bahasa Melayu as the national language, the sovereignty of the Malay Rulers.”

Putrajaya will table a Race Relations Act, one of two replacement laws for the Internal Security Act (ISA) in March to govern interaction between the races and foster mutual respect.

Nazri told Sinchew Daily in an interview published today Malaysia needed race relation laws as it was important to regulate what people say and do in a multi-cultural country.

He added that the new Act will be modelled after the British law, which bars discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnicity and nationality in employment, provision of goods and services, education and public functions.

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