

Najib knows our feelings about Zul Noordin, says MIC No. 2
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By Ida Lim

SEGAMAT, April 19 — The MIC's deputy president has said that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak was informed of the party leaders' "views" and "feelings" over Barisan Nasional's (BN) decision to field controversial Islamic firebrand Datuk Zulkifli Noordin in Election 2013.

"That one we have already expressed our views to prime minister so I don't want to talk about it. We have informed the prime minister of (our) feelings," Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam told The Malaysian Insider yesterday at a BN event here when asked to comment, making a reference to Najib, who is also the chairman of the ruling BN coalition.

Subramaniam, who is BN's candidate for the Segamat parliamentary seat, did not want to comment further on the issue.

On Wednesday, MIC leader S. Vell Paari had warned party president Datuk Seri G. Palanivel in a text message that BN could lose in Selangor if it insists on fielding Zulkifli, an incumbent independent MP who was recently in the news for his controversial remarks that angered the community.

According to the text message delivered to The Malaysian Insider from a party source on Wednesday, Vell Paari urged Palanivel to convey his concerns to Najib and asked for "favourable action" from the BN chairman, warning of a "disastrous situation" if not action is taken.

"Dear Datuk Seri G. Palanivel, Zulkifli Noordin being a BN candidate in Shah Alam is an insult to the Hindus in Malaysia. Everywhere people are getting emotional," he said in the message, which was also sent to all MIC central working committee members.

The son of former party chief Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu noted that in there are some 15,000 Indian voters in Shah Alam, 31,000 in Kota Raja, 21,000 in Kapar and 17,000 in Subang, many among whom he claimed were angered by Najib's selection of Zulkifli.

"We could lose nearly 50 per cent to 70 per cent of Indian votes which could result in loss for MIC candidates especially in Selangor but with Indian voters being a deciding vote, it could result in BN failing to capture Selangor," he said, adding a warning that the sentiment is also spreading to other states.

Another excerpt of the text message sent by Vell Paari in his role as MIC strategic adviser reads: "Dato Seri we cannot be keeping silent and letting everyone to walk away with an apology after insulting our religion and community."

Vell Paari had previously confirmed with The Malaysian Insider that he had sent the SMS.

Najib confirmed Zulkifli's candidacy in Shah Alam when unveiling the coalition's Selangor list on Tuesday, allowing the Kulim Bandar Baharu incumbent to run directly on a BN ticket.

The decision earned the caretaker prime minister much criticism, largely due to Zulkifli's reputation as a Muslim hardliner, his post as the vice-president of Malay right-wing group Perkasa and the recent controversy over his insults against the Hindu community.

Leaders from federal opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR) had immediately used Zulkifli's appointment as a campaign point in a ceramah in Ipoh, encouraging Indian voters not to support BN.

A video of Zulkifli uttering the word "Keling", which Malaysians of Indian descent consider derogatory, went viral recently, just days after another video was released in which he questioned an Indian trader on why Hindu gods did not prevent the man's shop from being flooded, drawing the wrath of Hindus.

Once a lawyer for Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Zulkifli had also questioned the purity of the Ganges River, also known as Ganga in India, which is considered sacred by Hindus.

Zulkifli became a BN-friendly independent MP and critical of the opposition when he was dismissed from PKR on March 6, 2010 over a police report he lodged against Shah Alam incumbent Khalid Abdul Samad of PAS.

Umno candidate Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin lost to Khalid in the 2008 general election by a 9,314-vote majority. In 2004, he had won against Khalid by a 13,410-vote majority.

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