

**Don't blame Chinese for rejecting BN, MIC's Vell Paari says
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BY CLARA CHOOI**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 7 – The Chinese should not be blamed for supporting Pakatan Rakyat (PR), MIC leader S. Vell Paari said today, disagreeing with accusations calling the community “ungrateful” for abandoning Barisan Nasional (BN) in Election 2013.

The son of former MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu also suggested that some among the country's second-largest ethnic group had rejected BN as punishment for it endorsing Perkasa members as its candidates.

“I believe the Chinese supported the Opposition because no action had been taken against Perkasa and Datuk Ibrahim Ali for their comments.

“Putting Perkasa members as BN-friendly candidates had also driven away Chinese and Indian votes in Selangor,” Vell (picture) was quoted in The Star Online as saying.

Vell's opinion contradicts that of party vice-president Datuk M. Saravanan who earlier today called Chinese voters “ungrateful” for voting against BN when it had served them well.

The Tapah MP also suggested that the government not help Chinese voters who rejected the coalition in Sunday's polls.

“I agree with the views of Datuk Seri Ali Rustam because even in my constituency, I have fulfilled my responsibility as MP well.

“I can't find any reasons why they should reject me... I share his view,” Saravanan told reporters after attending a closed-door meeting between BN lawmakers and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the PWTC here.

Ali, the former Malacca chief minister, was defeated in the contest for the Bukit Katil parliamentary seat in Sunday's polls.

The Umno supreme council member, who joined a list of big casualties in a polls battle that bloodied the ruling coalition's nose, blamed the Chinese for his loss, calling them “ungrateful” for rejecting BN despite his contribution to the community when he was chief minister.

But Vell, a known critic of his party, disagreed with the notion, saying that it would not be appropriate to ask the electorate to be “grateful” to the government for its contributions.

“We cannot ask Malaysians to be grateful for the government's efforts as it's the duty of the administration,” The Star quoted him saying.

Umno's Utusan Malaysia front-paged today the question “Apa lagi Cina mahu (What else do the Chinese want?) in what appeared to be an attempt to shape the results of Election 2013 as a Chinese-vs-Malay vote.

Analysts have said data from voting trends showed the outcome of Election 2013 was not simply the result of a “Chinese tsunami” as Najib has claimed but a major swing in the

urban and middle-class electorate that saw Malaysia's urban-rural rift widen.

But Utusan Malaysia, a newspaper that has represented the right-wing forces aligned largely with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, decided today to publish a number of stories blaming the Chinese for dividing Malaysia.

Utusan Malaysia's front page also suggests that Najib will have his hands full dealing with the powerful right-wing faction in Umno from which he received strong backing in the elections.

An analysis of how the vote went shows a country with rural-urban and class divisions that will make any reconciliation and necessary reforms even more difficult to implement.

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