

**Utusan departing from Najib's national reconciliation promise, says Saifuddin
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BY CLARA CHOOI**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 7 — Utusan Malaysia's pitting of the Chinese against the Malays on its front page today flies in the face of the national reconciliation process promised by Datuk Seri Najib Razak, former Umno deputy minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah has said.

The outspoken politician said a more intelligent approach should be used to dissect the outcome of last Sunday's polls, disagreeing with the simple notion that it had merely been a "Chinese tsunami" that caused the Barisan Nasional (BN) to bleed seats.

"This kind of headline is totally uncalled for. More so when the PM, in his victory speech, spoke about national reconciliation.

"I feel very, very sad that Utusan came up with such a thing," he told The Malaysian Insider when contacted.

Saifuddin (picture) said that while it was true that many among those in the Chinese community had voted against BN, it did not make these voters "ungrateful" or anti-Malay.

"We need to look at the results in totality. Maybe there was the Chinese vote... but it was not against the Malays and certainly not about being ungrateful.

"It was more like they wanted to teach the MCA a lesson. Some of them told me frankly — we like you, but we want to teach the MCA a lesson," he said.

Saifuddin was responding to today's front-page report in Umno's Utusan Malaysia where the paper posted 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.

The Malay-language daily, which is known to represent the right-wing forces aligned largely with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, published a number of stories blaming the Chinese for dividing Malaysia.

In the wrap-around front page, it featured a number of photographs which allegedly showed Chinese-looking youths wearing black to protest the results of the election.

The photographs are believed to have been lifted from the Internet and were also used by many right-wing bloggers aligned with Dr Mahathir.

Other stories highlighted on the front page include a quote attributed to former Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam that "they (Chinese) are very racist".

In bullet points, the newspaper blamed the DAP for race politics, and said the secular party wanted Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as prime minister so that it could rule the country.

Saifuddin pointed out that it was no secret that Umno owns the controversial Malay-language daily and by using such headlines, it appeared as if this was the stand taken by the BN lynchpin and its coalition partners.

In a Twitter posting earlier today, Saifuddin publicly expressed disagreement with the headline, saying, "Sy tak setuju tajuk "apa lagi Cina mahu?" Utusan Msia hr ni.Kita mesti bijaksana menilai keputusan PRU13. Sy kalah,tp x salahkn sesiapa."

[Translation: I disagree with the headline "What else do the Chinese want?" in Utusan Malaysia today. We must be smart when evaluating the results of the 13th general election. I lost but I did not blame anyone.]

In Sunday's polls, Saifuddin lost by a marginal 1,070 votes in his defence of the Temerloh federal seat to PAS Youth chief Nasrudin Hassan.

At the national level, BN cemented its place in Putrajaya with a smaller majority than in Election 2008, winning 133 seats to Pakatan Rakyat's (PR) 89.

But the ruling pact lost in terms of the popular vote, a factor that analysts are using to disagree with the notion that it had merely been a "Chinese tsunami" that caused the vote swing towards PR.

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